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Sogdian Painting

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Guitty Azarpay

Sogdian Painting

The Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art

With contributions by

A. M. Belenitskii, B. I. Marshak, and Mark J. Dresden

University of California Press

Berkeley · Los Angeles · London

This One
T3PY-1CK-FCH2

University of California Press
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California
University of California Press, Ltd.
London, England
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The Regents of the University of California

Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Azarpay, Guitty.
Sogdian painting.
Includes index.
1. Mural painting and decoration, Sogdian.
2. Transoxiana—Antiquities. I. Title.
ND2578.3.A9 751.7'3'09396 78-62849
ISBN 0-520-03765-0

Publication of this book has been aided by a grant
from The Millard Meiss Publication Fund of the
College Art Association of America.

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30. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting a frieze of banqueters, from *Panjikent XVI:10.* Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

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Preface

When the pre-Islamic state of Sogdiana that had flourished since the fifth century A.D. finally collapsed under mounting Arab attacks in the eighth century, the most serious challenge to the Muslim control of Transoxiana, the *mā warā' al-nahr* of the Arab sources, had been crushed.

Although early Islamic cosmopolitanism brought a new cultural orientation to Transoxiana, it failed to supplant entirely the pre-Islamic local traditions that, in one form or another, returned to color the cultural expressions of the Muslim age. That valid and viable earlier models had prompted the perpetuation of earlier literary and artistic patterns in Transoxiana is substantiated by material evidence from the pre-Islamic age in the form of texts, archaeological data and works of art. In the field of art, the Sogdian pre-Islamic tradition is now particularly well documented by a rich collection of wall paintings, excavated in Soviet Central Asia largely within the past three decades. Ever since the discovery of these spectacular murals there has been a tendency to regard Sogdiana as an original and creative artistic center that generated impulses beyond its own immediate cultural horizons. In asserting the independence of the artistic centers of Transoxiana, it has become customary to question or reject earlier notions that derived the art of Transoxiana from West Iranian or Persian sources.

In a brilliant essay on the stylistic development of the Sogdian paintings, the late M. M. D'iakonov in 1954 looked to the earlier artistic traditions of Transoxiana for the origin of the Islamic miniature painting tradition of the Herat School of the fifteenth century. D'iakonov saw Sogdian painting as an expression of a feudal age with social and ideological patterns that were perpetuated under similar feudal conditions in Transoxiana and eastern Iran in the later Muslim age. Thus despite the gap of some seven hundred years that separates the Sogdian tradition of monumental painting and the miniature painting school of Behzād, the two traditions were linked, according to D'iakonov, by virtue of their similar environmen-

tal conditions. D'iakonov did not live to develop these hypotheses. But because of their originality and far-reaching implications for the history of Islamic art, D'iakonov's theories deserve to be tested against the archaeologist's spade and the results of current scholarship in this field.

As a preliminary to the study of Sogdian painting, a general outline of the history and culture of pre-Islamic Sogdiana is provided by Mark J. Dresden, in the *Introductory Note*. Soviet excavations and a review and assessment of Sogdian painting is offered in *Part One*, by Professor Alexander M. Belenitskii, the Academy of Sciences, Institute of Archaeology, Leningrad, and Dr. Boris I. Marshak, the Department of Oriental Antiquities, the State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad.

Part Two, inclusive of chapters 1–7 and Appendix, prepared by this writer, seeks to examine: (1) the traditions of wall painting in Central and Western Asia in the early medieval period; (2) the origin and distinctive features of Sogdian painting; (3) the survival of Sogdian artistic conventions in Islamic art; (4) the classification of Sogdian painting.

These points are treated under separate chapter headings organized in the following order. The Sogdian painting tradition is first considered within the immediately relevant context of the art of Western and Central Asia (chapter 1). Inasmuch as the thematic content of Sogdian painting determined the stylistic particulars and thrust of that art, the subject matter of Sogdian painting is next identified and analyzed (chapters 2–3). The formulaic quality and distinctive stylistic patterns of Sogdian painting are discussed in chapter 4. In chapter 5 the major categories of Sogdian painting are analyzed in terms of technique, use of color, type of pigment, role of sketch, and artistic intent. These considerations provide specific guidelines that may be used to determine the relative position of a given painting within the general framework of the tradition as a whole. Such means may determine not only the relative age of a given painting, but occasionally also its specific artistic affinity to a given school.

The pictorial epic represents a special category of themes that are peculiar to Persian miniature painting from the thirteenth century. Since the pictorial epic was not in use in the Islamic art of the Arab world, its genesis and development in Persian painting may be correlated with the rebirth of epic literature in the Iranian world after the ninth century. Like the tradition of epic literature, the highly refined and consistent artistic idiom of the pictorial epic in Persian miniature painting presupposes the existence of earlier artistic models. Yet since both the Sasanian and Byzantine traditions had ignored the pictorial epic, the forerunners

of the pictorial epic in the early Persian miniatures must be sought in a different artistic tradition. The likelihood of the continuity of the Sogdian tradition of the pictorial epic and specific Sogdian artistic patterns in early Islamic art is discussed in chapter 6. Finally, the classification of Sogdian painting according to archaeological context is offered in the Appendix.

Eivān is the romanization used throughout the text for this architectural feature. Transcriptions of names of modern cities and geographical locations are given according to current usage, usually without diacritical marks. Diacritical points are generally limited to early medieval names. With the exception of a few names, cf. Samarkand (Samarqand), Zarafshan (Zerafshan, Zeravshan), Bukhara (Bokhara), which find several accepted transcriptions, an attempt has been made to offer consistent transcriptions of geographical locations and names.

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Acknowledgments

Preliminary research on the history of art of Sogdiana was initiated by the writer in 1967 and was made possible by travel grants from the American Philosophical Society and the Center for Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Los Angeles. The present study was undertaken in 1970 and made possible by two grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, awarded the writer in 1970–71, and 1971–72.

I wish to express my gratitude to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Center for Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, and the American Philosophical Society for their generous support of my research. My special thanks are due to colleagues in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, the University of California, at Berkeley, for availing me of research facilities during the course of my work on this project in 1970–72.

I am indebted to many individuals for helpful suggestions and encouragement. First I wish to express my sincere thanks to Professor A.M. Belenitskii and Dr. B.I. Marshak, the excavators of the Sogdian murals from Panjikent, for their unfailing cooperation and their invaluable contribution to this book (*Part One*). Without their sustained interest, communications and consultation, the project would not have reached completion. I am also grateful to Professor B.B. Piotrovskii, Director of the State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, for availing me of the opportunity for prolonged and repeated study of the Sogdian murals in the State Hermitage Museum, in Leningrad. The Copyright Agency of the USSR, in Moscow, kindly granted permission to publish here the text and illustrations prepared by A. M. Belenitskii and B.I. Marshak, and the color plates prepared by D. Belous of Moscow. Among many colleagues in the Soviet Union who have in one way or another assisted my work on this project, I wish to name Dr. V.A. Lukonin, Department of Oriental Antiquities, The Hermitage Museum, Professor B. A. Litvinskii, the Institute of the Peoples of Asia, Academy of Sciences, Moscow,

Dr. B.IA. Staviskii, the Institute for the Restoration of Antiquities, Moscow, Professors V.A. Livshits and A.M. Mandelstam, the Academy of Sciences, Leningrad, and E. Bendik, director of the Library, Institute of the Peoples of Asia, Moscow. The staff of the Rudaki Museum, at Panjikent, kindly extended to me various courtesies during my visit to the site in 1971.

Among colleagues in the United States and Europe whose advice I have sought on various matters discussed in the present study, I wish to name Professors George Dales, Richard Ettinghausen, Mark J. Dresden, Roman Ghirshman, Katharina Otto-Dorn, Alexander C. Soper, Martin Schwartz and Edward H. Schafer. I wish to express special thanks to Professor Dresden for his contribution, *Introductory Note*, to the present study, and for his helpful comments on the manuscript itself. Professors Otto-Dorn and Soper also read and commented on the first draft of my manuscript. The Russian text of the contribution by A.M. Belenitskii and B.I. Marshak was translated by Phyllis Reed and edited by this writer. Their notes were edited and translated by Barry Jordan. The maps of Central Asia and Transoxiana were prepared by Virginia Herrick. The index was prepared by Noël Siver who also edited the entire manuscript.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Editorial Department of the University of California Press, in particular to Philip E. Lilienthal, associate director, and to Phyllis Killen, administrative assistant, whose efforts and cooperation made this book a reality. I gratefully acknowledge the subsidy towards the publication of this book awarded in 1978 by the Millard Meiss Publication Fund Committee.

Finally, I remember the interest and warm support of this project, when it was only an idea, expressed by my late teachers Professors Otto Maenchen-Helfen and Walter B. Henning. To their memory the present study is dedicated in gratitude.

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August 1978

Abbreviations

AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AMI	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, Berlin
APAW	*Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin
BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, London
CAJ	*Central Asian Journal*, The Hague/Wiesbaden
FAN SSSR	*Filial Akademii nauk SSSR*
HO	*Handbuch der Orientalistik*, B. Spuler, ed., Leiden/Köln
Izv. AN TadzhSSR	*Izvestiia Akademii nauk Tadzhikskoi SSR, Otdelenie obshchestvennykh nauk*, Dushanbe
IsMEO	*Istituto italiano per il medio ed estremo Oriente*, Roma
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, London
KSIA	*Kratkie soobshcheniia instituta arkheologii AN SSSR*, Moskva
KSIIMK	*Kratkie soobshcheniia o dokladakh i polevykh issledovaniiakh Instituta istorii material'noi kul'tury AN SSSR*, Moskva/Leningrad
MDAFA	*Mémoires de la Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan*, Paris
MIA	*Materialy i issledovaniia po arkheologii SSSR*, Moskva/Leningrad
OLZ	*Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, Berlin
SA	*Sovetskaia arkheologiia*, Moskva
SĖ	*Sovetskaia ėtnografiia*, Moskva/Leningrad
SGĖ	*Soobshcheniia Gosudarstvennogo Ėrmitazha*, Leningrad

Skul'ptura	A.M. Belenitskii et al., *Skul'ptura i zhivopis' drevnego Piandzhikenta*, Moskva 1959
SPAW	*Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin
TGĖ	*Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Ėrmitazha*, Leningrad
TKhAĖĖ	*Trudy Khorezmskoi arkheologo-ėtnograficheskoi ėkspeditsii*, Moskva
TTAĖ	*Trudy Tadzhikskoi arkheologicheskoi ėkspeditsii*, Instituta istorii material'noi kul'tury AN SSSR, Moskva/Leningrad
VDI	*Vestnik drevnei istorii*, Moskva
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig/Wiesbaden
Zhivopis'	A.IU. IAkubovskii et al., *Zhivopis' drevnego Piandzhikenta*, Moskva 1954

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Introductory Note

by Mark J. Dresden, University of Pennsylvania

For lust of knowing what should not be known
We take the Golden Road to Samarkand.

James Elroy Flecker, Hassan, *Act V, Scene 2*

The unique mural paintings that are at the center of Guitty Azarpay's discussion and analysis of Sogdian painting stand (if the prehistoric period is disregarded) near the end of what is known of more than a thousand years of Sogdian history. The paintings were discovered by successive teams of Russian archaeologists in the period since 1946 at the ancient site of Panjikent. The city of Panjikent is in Tajikistan and is situated some forty miles east of Samarkand, which itself is in Uzbekistan (pl. 1, map 2). Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are two of the five so-called "Central Asian"[1] Soviet Republics, the other three being Kazakhstan, Kirgizia and Turkmenistan. Panjikent exists today, although its present location does not correspond to that of the older one, and is located on the Zerafshan River. In the Sogdian language and script the name of the city is *pncyknδ(h)* representing *Pančikanθ(a)* or simply *pncy* representing *Panč*, and the spellings *Panjikand, Panjikent* and others go back to the spelling in Arabic script *pnjyknd* representing *Panjikand.*

The spectacular results of the excavations at Panjikent are matched by the equally revealing discovery of extensive archival materials written in the Sogdian language. The first specimen was accidentally found in 1933 at a castle on Mount Mugh

1. The term "Central Asia" is mostly used in a wider sense so as to include areas farther to the east and parts of the Chinese province of Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan).

(Muγ) about forty miles east of Panjikent, also on the Zerafshan River. In fact, the archives turned out to be those of Dēwāštīč, the last indigenous ruler (Sogdian *pncy MR'Y δyw'štyc* "D., the lord of Panč") of Panjikent before the occupation of the area by Arab armies and administration in the early eighth century.[2] The data provided by the Panjikent and Mugh documentation complement each other. They are both primary sources for Sogdian history between the fifth and early eighth centuries and are testimony of an extensive historical development. What is more, the Mugh documents, contrary to the majority of Sogdian written documents which originate elsewhere, were found in and come from Sogdian territory (Sogdiana) itself. This area centering around the cities of Samarkand and Bukhara, now both in Uzbekistan, is in Transoxiana, between the middle and upper courses of the Amu Dar'ya (Oxus) and Syr Dar'ya (Jaxartes) rivers. There is further evidence that at least part of the Ferghana Valley, which stretches through Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirgizia over a distance of some 170 miles, and the area near the city of Merv, now Mary in Turkmenistan, originally or at a later time can be considered as belonging to Sogdiana.

The earliest monumental and scriptural references to the Sogdians and Sogdiana date from the sixth to fifth century B.C. Among the many delegations of representatives from the various parts of the Achaemenid empire of Darius and Xerxes a group of Sogdians appears on the east stairway of the audience hall, known as the *apadāna*, on the terrace of Persepolis. They offer cups or some other kind of vessel, cloth, an animal skin and a pair of rams in homage to the "King of Kings." Their identification seems to rest on their distinctive footwear. As for written evidence, in the three major lists of satrapies of the Achaemenid empire, drawn up under Darius in the Old Persian language, Sogdian(a) (Old Persian *sug^{u}da*) is mentioned as an area near Bactria, Khwarezmia and Gandhāra. According to V. A. Livshits,[3] Yaghnōbi is a continuation of early medieval Sogdian dialects of the Ustrushana area, the western part of the Ferghana Valley in Uzbekistan, while the Sogdian literary language represents the dialect of Samarkand. In the Zoroastrian scriptures known as the Avesta, no part of which can be dated with certainty, Sogdian(a) occurs as *suxδa* in a list of lands between Marw (Merv) and Khwarezmia, or as

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2. For the publication of the Mugh documents see the bibliography at the end of the *Introductory Note*.

3. V. A. Livshits, *Narody Srednei Azii i Kazakhstana* I (Moskva: Akademiia Nauk SSSR 1962), 152.

suγδa as the second best land created by Ahura Mazdā. As is to be expected, these written indications give only general and no specific geographical information.

The participation of a Sogdian detachment in the ill-fated military campaign mounted by Xerxes against Greece in 480 B.C. obviously cannot be taken as an event of lasting effect. When in the second half of the fourth century B.C. the reverse happened in the relations between Iran and Greece, or rather Macedonia, and Alexander the Great led his armies against Iran, the final resistance offered by the Sogdians under Spitamenes in 329–328 B.C. not only had the crucial result of the destruction of the Sogdian city of Maracanda (Samarkand) but also forced many of its inhabitants to leave their homeland. While migrating in eastern directions and settling permanently in the oasis cities across Central Asia (map 1), they continued to pursue the commercial and business interests with eastern traders and merchants that had been established earlier. Centuries later, the deep penetration of the Sogdian presence in Central Asia showed up in a collection of some nine Sogdian documents, known as the "Ancient Letters," that were found in a watchtower of the Great Wall of China.[4] They have been convincingly dated to the early fourth century A.D.,[5] and although their interpretation is far from complete, their contents hint at the political unrest along the "Silk Route," the main artery of communication between the West and the East along which Sogdian and other traders controlled "international" trade and commerce (map 1). As one eastern Sogdian merchant said to a colleague in Samarkand concerning an event which took place in A.D. 311:

And, Sir, the last emperor [of the western Chin dynasty in the city of Lo-yang]—so they say—fled from Saraγ [Lo-yang] because of the famine. And his fortified residence [palace] and fortified town were set on fire. The residence burnt down and the town was [destroyed]. So Saraγ (is) no more. . . . Moreover, then the emperor was made prisoner and led into [captivity] by the [Ḥū]ns [Hsiung-nu].[6]

In the post-Alexandrian period when the rulers of the eastern territories began to break away from the control of the Seleucids, the chieftain of Bactria took the lead in establishing, in the middle of the third century B.C., an independent Graeco-Bactrian kingdom which may have included Sogdiana. The presence of

4. For the publication of the Ancient Letters see the bibliography under Reichelt.
5. By W. B. Henning, "The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters," *BSOAS* XII (1948), 601–615.
6. Translation by W. B. Henning, ibid., 605.

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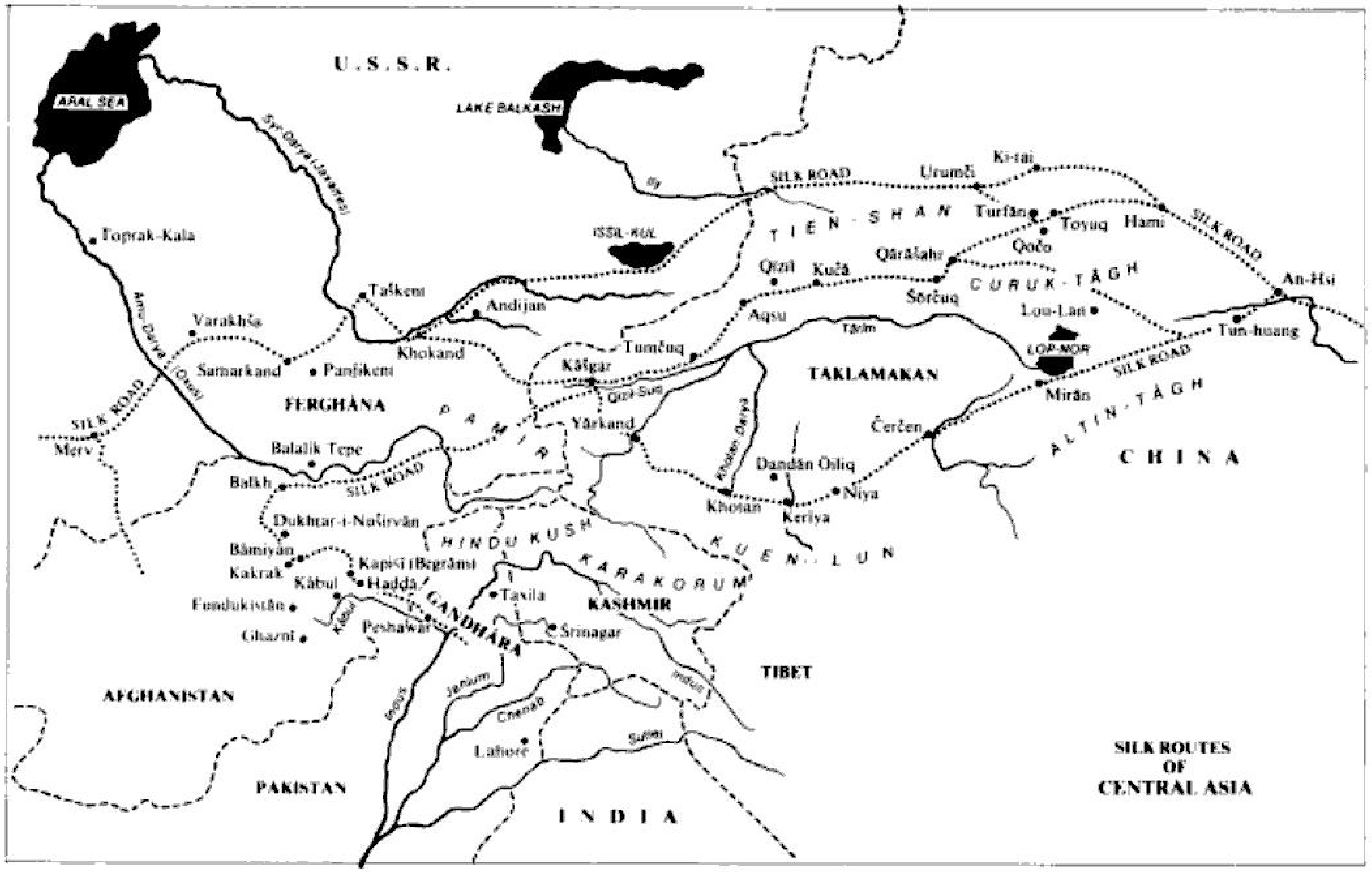

Map 1. General map of Central Asia showing the principal sites on the pre-Islamic trade routes. Prepared by Virginia Herrick.

Graeco-Bactrian coinage and pottery in the city of Afrasiab near Samarkand can be adduced in favor of such an assumption.

Little is known about Sogdiana in Parthian times from the middle of the third century B.C. to the beginning of the third century A.D. Under the following Sasanian dynasty Sogdiana was part of the empire under a royal governor for about one century after A.D. 260. In the following centuries it fell under the sovereignty of foreign peoples among whom were the Hephthalites and Turks.

When Islam entered the Iranian plateau in the middle of the seventh century, its presence was soon felt across the Oxus River. The Bukhara-Samarkand area experienced both success and defeat in its efforts of resistance. Small local principalities came into existence for shorter or longer periods of time. One such local chieftain was Dēwāštič who has already been mentioned as the last ruler of Panjikent; he took refuge on Mount Mugh in the early eighth century, a move which ended in the capture of his residence and his own death. What little remained of power and culture in Sogdiana was finally wiped out in the thirteenth century by the Mongol armies under Chingiz-Khan. A descendant of the Sogdian language remains in use until the present day in the form of Yaghnōbi which is spoken in the Yaghnōb River valley to the north of the Pamir Mountains.

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The evidence mentioned so far shows beyond doubt that the Sogdians represent an essential constituent of Central Asian civilization. Besides the samples of architectural and figurative art and technique that have come to light at different sites, abundant proof of writing activities for various purposes and genres has been found. Sogdian (*swγδyk* and other forms such as *swtʾyk* representing respectively *sū̆γδīk* and *sū̆dīk*) is, of course, an eastern Iranian language like the languages of Khwarezmia and Khotan, and contrary to the members of the western group such as Middle Persian (Pahlavi), New Persian (Fārsi) and Parthian shows a highly diversified nominal, pronominal and verbal system of distinctive cases, tenses and moods. The observation has been made that Sogdian shares certain linguistic features with the Old Persian of the Achaemenid inscriptions on the one hand and with Avestan, the language of the Zoroastrian scriptures, on the other. To base further weighty linguistic or historical arguments on the available evidence is, however, not fully warranted.

For the notation of the language three main varieties of script were devised. Any one of these three scriptional systems, all of which ultimately go back to one or another Semitic-Aramaic alphabet, was used according to the kind of subject matter (inscriptions, documents, religious texts, etc.) that the occasion called for.

They also show, besides the expected variations in individual scribal hand, differences in the shape of single graphs which depend on the place and time of composition of any one sample of writing.[7]

A short survey of the more important writings in Sogdian, clearly only a small portion of what once existed, intends to serve the purpose of further stressing the high degree of development of this aspect of Sogdian civilization.[8] Two main categories can be distinguished, secular and religious. In the first category fall such materials as coins, inscriptions, documents and the like; in the second group are translations into Sogdian of Buddhist, Manichaean and Christian religious works. The extent both in number and length of the latter group is considerably larger than that of the former and for that reason alone the linguistic data they contain form the basis of what is known of Sogdian grammar and vocabulary.

The first group, written in what has been termed the Samarkand type of script, is of primary importance for its historical data. Coins with Sogdian legends have been found in many locations including Panjikent.[9] The earliest specimens may have been manufactured as early as the second century A.D. Inscriptions on different kinds of materials, among them ostraca, have also been discovered at many sites such as Panjikent, Varakhsha, west of Bukhara, and elsewhere. Two major collections of documents, the "Ancient Letters" and the archives of Mount Mugh, have already been mentioned. The latter deal with matters of an administrative, legal and economic nature as shown by the following quotations:

Māxyān shall hold these mills for a term of one year; and within one year Māxyān shall give the king Dēwāštīč from these three mills, (as) rent for one year, 460 *kapīč* [Persian kawīž] of flour. [Document B 4]

(I hear that) you do not give (to those) to whom I instructed you to give grain. Would you then give (grain to those) to whom you should not (give)? [Document A 18]

If Čatta decides that she will not remain as a wife with Ut-tegin, but will part (?) with him, she shall leave him. [Document Nov. 3].[10]

So far only one fragment of nonreligious literature has turned up. It relates the struggle between Rustam and the *dēws* (demons), a theme which is well known from Firdausi's *Shāhnāma*. The Sogdian fragment is independent from the story as

7. For a local alphabet see V.A. Livschitz, "A Sogdian Alphabet from Panjikant," in *W.B. Henning Memorial Volume*, edited by M. Boyce and I. Gershevitch (1970), 256–263.

8. For details on these writings see the bibliography.

9. See O.I. Smirnova, *Katalog monet s gorodishcha Pendzhikent* (1963). These coins date from the eighth century.

10. Translation by I. Gershevitch, *Central Asian Journal* VII (1962), 84, 87, 91.

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told by Firdausi, however, and, in addition, is written in a style of its own. Although the origin of the Sogdian story is unknown, it shows like the mural paintings from Panjikent that the legendary cycle of which the heroic figure of Rustam is the protagonist was very much alive in eastern Iran. Because of its uniqueness the piece deserves quotation in full.[11]

... magic. (The demons) immediately fled to (the city). Rustam thus went in pursuit as far as the city-gate. Many (demons) died from being trampled; (only) a thousand managed to enter the city. They shut the gates. Rustam turned back with great renown, went to a good pasture, stopped, took off the saddle (and) let (his) horse loose on the grass. He himself rested, ate food, was satisfied, spread a rug, lay down (and) began to sleep. The demons stood in consultation in an assembly. They said to one another: "It was a great evil, a great shame on our part, that we thus took refuge in the city because of a single rider. Why do we not strike? Either let us all die (and) be finished or let us exact vengeance for our lords!" The demons—(those) who had been left over from the battle—began to prepare great heavy equipment and strong armor. In great haste they opened the city-gates. Many archers, many charioteers, many (demons) riding elephants, many riding ..(?).., many riding pigs, many riding foxes, many riding dogs, many riding on snakes (and) on lizards, many on foot, many who went flying like vultures and ..(?).., many upside-down, the head downwards and the feet upwards, (all these demons) bellowed out a roar, for a great while they raised rain, snow, hail (and) great thunder, they opened (their) jaws (and) released fire, flame (and) smoke. They departed in search of the valiant Rustam. Then also came the perceptive (?) Raxš [Rustam's horse] (and) woke Rustam. Rustam arose out of (his) sleep, quickly donned (his) leopard-skin garment, tied on (his) quiver, mounted Raxš (and) hastened towards the demons. When Rustam saw from afar the army of the demons, he said to Raxš: "Come, sir, retreat little (by little); let us perform (a trick) so that the demons (pursue us) to the forest ..." Raxš agreed. Immediately Rustam turned back. When the demons saw, at once both the riding-animals and the infantry quickly hurled themselves forward. One to another they said: "Now the chief's hope (?) has been broken; no more will it be possible (for him) to offer battle with us. Never let him escape! Moreover do not devour him, but take (him) alive that we may show him evil punishment (and) harsh torture!" The demons encouraged one another greatly; they all shouted out together (and) set out in pursuit of Rustam. Then Rustam turned back, attacked the demons like a fierce lion upon (its) prey or a hyena (upon the) flock, like a falcon upon (a hare [?] or) a porcupine upon a snake, and began (to destroy) them ...

11. The Sogdian Rustam story, published by É. Benveniste, *Textes sogdiens Pelliot* (1940), 134–136, consists of two fragments, one in the British Museum (British Library) in London, the other in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris; they follow each other without a break as pointed out by W.B. Henning, *BSOAS* XI (1945), 465, n. 2. Except for one or two minor changes the present translation is by N. Sims-Williams in his "The Sogdian Fragments of the British Library," *Indo-Iranian Journal* XVIII (1976), 56–58.

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The members of the communities of Sogdian settlers along the "Silk Route" are responsible for the many religious texts that were recovered in the beginning of this century at the Turfan oasis in Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang Province). Among the Turfan materials[12] are both smaller and some rather large fragments of Buddhist texts belonging to the teachings of the Mahāyāna or "Great Vehicle" school and written in calligraphic Samarkand script; Manichaean fragments written in a variety of the (Semitic) Palmyrenian script; and Christian texts of the Nestorian persuasion written in a script close to the Syriac-Estranghelo alphabet.[13] Theologians, priests, monks, teachers, scribes and the like, who were the official representatives of those three religions, are, of course, the direct origin of the religious literature. In many instances this literature consists of translations from originals in other languages. The identification of the original text has been and still is almost indispensable for the accurate interpretation of the Sogdian translation. In their desire to render the original precisely, the Sogdian translators more than once resorted to unidiomatic Sogdian; they also made mistakes as is only too easy to understand given the often highly technical nature of the original. In the case of the Buddhist materials the originals are mostly of Indian origin; for the Christian texts originals in the Syriac language served as the example. The Manichaean materials are unfortunately the most fragmentary of the three groups. In fact, no complete text has survived and very little remains, for instance, of the canonical works the authorship of which was ascribed to Mani himself. On the other hand, the Manichaean materials, however small the fragment, are of prime importance for the reconstruction of the complexities of Manichaean thought; they also retain, in some cases, a measure of the vivid and imaginative style Mani and other Manichaean leaders and writers used. It is further of interest that a few fragments of popular stories in parable style have survived; they testify to the role of the Manichaean Sogdians as middlemen in the transmission of stories which are incorporated in the Indian (Sanskrit) *Pañcatantra* and the Iranian (Persian) *Kalīla wa-Dimna* story collections.[14] In summary, the value of the Sogdian religious texts lies less in their literary worth than in the linguistic data they provide. Yet they remain an impressive monument to the high literacy of the Sogdian religious elite.

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12. See W. Lentz, "Fünfzig Jahre Arbeit an den iranischen Handschriften der deutschen Turfan-Sammlung," *ZDMG* CVI (1956), *3*–*22*.
13. For details on these writings see the bibliography.
14. See W. B. Henning, "Sogdian Tales," *BSOAS* XI (1945), 465–487.

Two inscriptions in Sogdian still have to be mentioned. The first is from Bugut in Central Mongolia and has been dated around A.D. 580.[15] The second was found in Qarabalgasun, the capital of the Uighurs or Eastern Turks on the Orkhon River in Mongolia; it is trilingual (Sogdian, Chinese and Uighur Turkish) and is from around A.D. 820.[16] Both inscriptions point to the prominence of the Sogdian language among the Uighurs. The introduction of the Sogdian script of the Samarkand-Buddhist type to the Uighurs, which then became the basis for one of the alphabets in which the Uighur language was recorded, in the second half of the sixth century seems assured; and it is not impossible that the Sogdian language was used as the official one by the early Uighurs. Shortly after A.D. 565 the first ruler of the Western Turks, whose realm included Sogdiana, used Sogdians as his representatives to the Sasanian court in Iran and to Byzantium for the purpose of discussing commercial relations. If any such proof were still needed, the civilizing intermediary role of the Sogdians in the vast area between Sogdiana and Mongolia is clear from such testimonials. Continued investigation of the relations between the Sogdians and other populations and nations in Central Asia, so far a rather neglected topic, will turn up more confirming evidence for the eminence of the position of the Sogdians in Central Asia and farther east.

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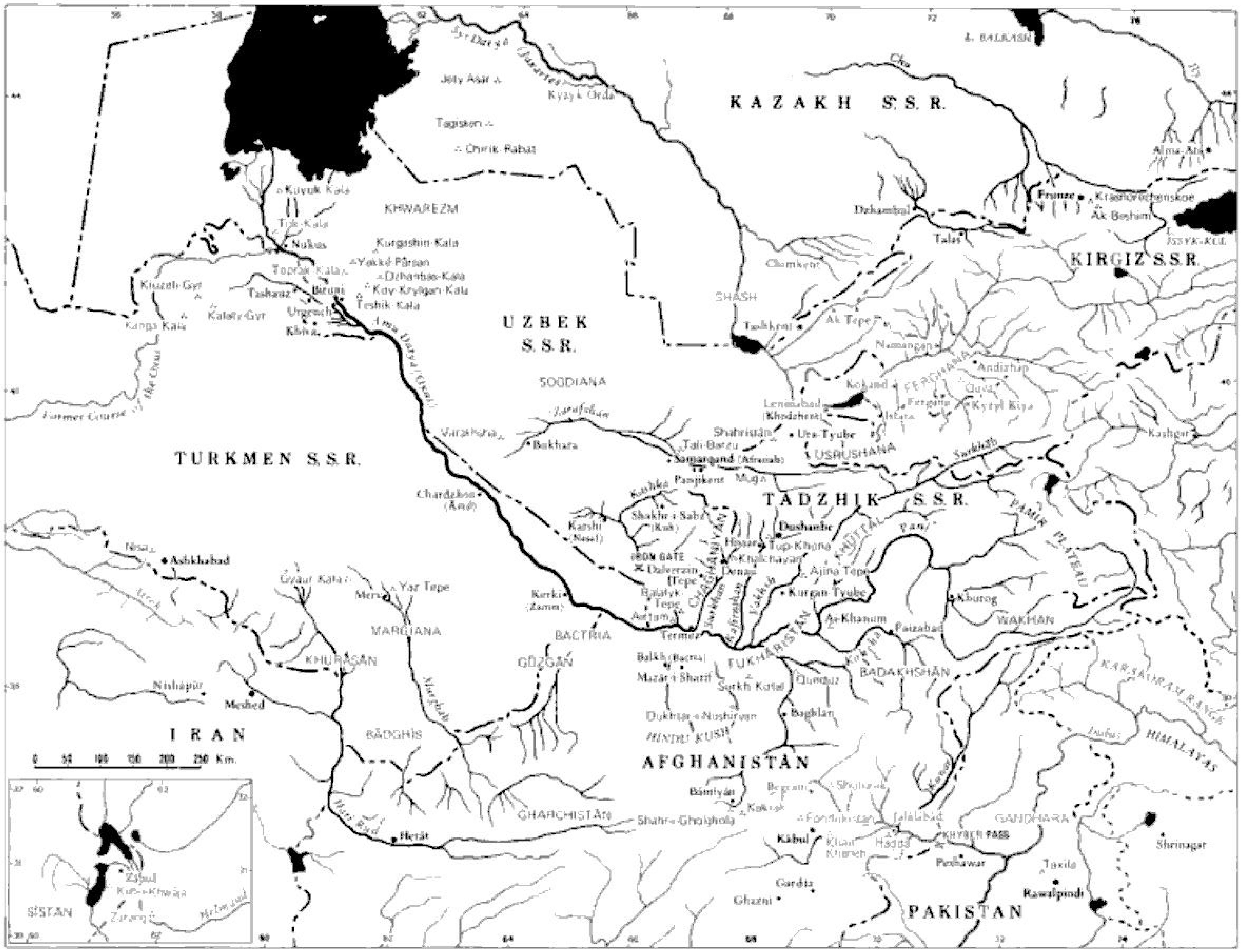
PART ONE

The Paintings of Sogdiana

by A. M. Belenitskii and B. I. Marshak



Map 2. *Transoxiana showing medieval sites, principal modern cities and present political boundaries. Prepared by Virginia Herrick.*

The Paintings of Sogdiana

In the last few decades, archaeologists have discovered relics of ancient monumental art in almost all the principal regions of Middle Asia.* No further proof is now needed that Middle Asia as a whole occupies a special, completely independent place in the general history of Eastern art. It is now quite obvious that the Middle Asian art of the early middle ages has a long history of its own, and that we are dealing with an art that developed its own artistic schools, each of which in turn had its own special characteristics and traditions.

These individual schools, which arose and developed at individual centers, were not, however, isolated phenomena. They developed under conditions of constant interaction and mutual exchange in Middle Asia itself and in Byzantium, Iran, India, China and among the Turks of the Steppe. We now know of three centers in which monumental art flourished in the territory of Sogdiana situated in the central region of Middle Asia. These are Varakhsha, near Bukhara,[1] Afrasiab (the ruins of ancient Samarkand, the capital city of Sogdiana)[2] and Panjikent, a small city approximately sixty kilometers east of Samarkand (see map 2). The artistic monuments of these centers date to the early middle ages. The most ancient of them (certain paintings from Panjikent) are not earlier than the fifth century, and the latest not later than the eighth century.

Relics of monumental art have also been discovered in the territories adjacent to Sogdiana. In this period, the Sogdians, an East Iranian people, also lived in Ustrushana, a principality northeast of Sogdiana. Remarkable paintings of the eighth to ninth centuries, discovered at Shahristan, in Ustrushana, are very similar

* Middle Asia refers to Soviet Central Asia which encompasses a more extensive territory than that implied by the term "Transoxiana." The terms "Transoxiana" and "Central Asia" used in *Part Two* of the present study are equivalent to the Soviet usage of "Middle Asia" and "Central Asia" respectively.

1. V.A. Shishkin, *Varakhsha* (Moskva 1963).
2. L.I. Al'baum, *Zhivopos' Afrasiaba* (Tashkent 1975).

to the art of Sogdiana proper.[3] Farther to the east, we know of the Buddhist temples of Semirech'e,[4] a region of Sogdian colonization in the northern foothills of Tien Shan, and Ferghana.[5]

The extensive region of Tukhāristān, divided into a number of small possessions, was situated south of Sogdiana, beyond the Hissar ridge, and near the Hindu Kush mountain range. Here were discovered early works datable to A.D. first to fourth centuries, the era of the Kushan kingdom, as well as monumental art and sculpture of the early middle ages. Mention should be made of such long renowned monuments as Bāmiyān[6] and Fundukistān[7] and the relatively recently discovered Dilberjin-tepe,[8] Balalyk-tepe,[9] Ajina-tepe[10] and Qal'a-i Kafirnihan.[11]

In contrast to Tukhāristān, the ancient history and ancient art of Sogdiana are almost unknown. A city temple of the early centuries of the Christian era, with wall painting, stucco and clay sculpture, was discovered at the town-site of Er-Kurgan in southern Sogdiana (near Karshi).[12] The study of this monument is only now beginning. The prehistory of Sogdian monumental art of the early middle ages is still quite obscure, and the roots of certain specific phenomena often

3. N.N. Negmatov, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov Ustrushany (predvaritel'noe soobshchenie)," *SA* 3 (1973); idem, "Ėmblema Rima v zhivopisi Ustrushany i drevnevostochnaia mifologicheskaia traditsiia," *Izv. AN TadzhSSR*, vyp. 1 (71) (1973); idem, "K voprosu o roli Vostoka v slozhenii drevnerimskoi legendarnoi traditsii," *Izv. AN TadzhSSR*, vyp. 1 (75) (1974); V.L. Voronina, N.N. Negmatov, "Otkrytie Ustrushany," *Nauka i chelovechestvo; mezhdunarodnyi ezhegodnik 1975* (Moskva 1975); V. Sokolovskii, "O zhivopisi Malogo zala dvortsovogo kompleksa gorodishcha Kalai Kakhkakha I (Shakhristan, Tadzhikskaia SSR)," *SGĖ* XXXIX (1974).

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5. V.A. Bulatova, *Drevniaia Kuva* (Tashkent 1972), 51–93, figs. 13–28.

6. A. Godard, Y. Godard, J. Hackin, *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* II (Paris 1928); J. Hackin and J. Carl, *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* III (Paris 1933); B. Rowland, *Central Asian Art* (Baden-Baden 1971), 82–111; J. Auboyer, *Afghanistan und seine Kunst* (Prague 1968), 53–54, pls. 68–76.

7. J. Hackin, *Le monastère bouddhique de Fondukistān*, *MDAFA* VIII (Paris 1959); Auboyer, *Afghanistan und seine Kunst*, 55–56, pls. 78–84; Rowland, *Central Asian Art*, 114–121.

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11. B.A. Litvinskii, "Freski Kalai-Kafirnigana," *Vokrug sveta* 5 (1976), 44–46.

12. R. Suleimanov et al., "Raskopki na gorodishche Er-kurgan," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1974 goda* (Moskva 1975), 513–514.

must be judged by analogy with similar phenomena in neighboring countries. The closing date for the period studied is the Arab conquest in the eighth century which brought to a close the monumental art of pre-Islamic Sogdiana.

Principal Historic Events

Sogdiana and the Sogdians are mentioned in the Behistun inscription of Darius (sixth century B.C.). By this time the Sogdians were already governed by the Persian kings of the Achaemenid dynasty. There is almost no information on Sogdiana in the following period. Historians of the campaign of Alexander of Macedon only told of the desperate resistance of the Sogdians against this conqueror. The Greeks, however, did not succeed in establishing any firm authority over Sogdiana.[13]

The progress of the Sogdians in organizing transcontinental trade along the Great Silk Route, connecting China with the Near East and Europe, dates from the first centuries A.D. By the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the "Ancient Sogdian Letters" show that Sogdian colonies, which maintained permanent relations with metropolitan Samarkand, were already flourishing in Eastern Turkestan and China.[14] In the fifth century, *Pei shih* gives information on the Middle Asian states, among which are mentioned Samarkand, Bukhara and Nakhshab (in southern Sogdiana). Also mentioned are Kabudan and Ishtikhan, the small possessions near Samarkand and, apparently, Kesh (close to modern Shahrisabz).[15] In later sources the list of principalities is more complete, but this is apparently not so much due to the difference in the situation as due to the detailed nature of the description itself.[16] It is difficult to determine the date of the formation of the small Sogdian principalities which were to a certain extent dependent on Samarkand. Sources of the third century and earlier generally ignore the internal situation in the established principalities governed by the great state of K'ang-chu which was headed by nomads.

E. V. Zeimal', on the basis of numismatic evidence, determined that from the

13. E. Zeimal', "'Varvarskie podrazhaniia' kak istoricheskii istochnik," *SGĖ* XL (1975), 60.

14. W. B. Henning, "The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters," *BSOAS* XII (1948), 3–4.

15. *Pei shih*, chapter 97; A. M. Mandel'shtam, "O slozhenii tadzhikskoi narodnosti v Sredneaziatskom mezhdurech'e," *SA* XX (1954), 76–79; A. Hermann, "Die ältesten chinesischen Karten vom Zentral- und Westasien," *OLZ*, 1920, 189; K. Shiratori, "A Study on Su-te, or Sogdiana," *Memoires of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 2 (Tokyo 1928).

16. Mandel'shtam, however, is of a different opinion, see "O slozhenii tadzhikskoi narodnosti," *SA* XX (1954), 83.

last centuries before the Christian era down to the beginning of the middle ages an independent coin die existed in several principalities: at Samarkand, at Bukhara, and in southwestern Sogdiana, as well as in a certain area in southern Sogdiana.[17] Therefore, the Sogdian principalities were mainly formed in antiquity, and the changes in their futures were related only to their government by a given ruling power. Not all the many other principalities mentioned for the seventh to eighth centuries, however, issued coins. While steadily maintaining its own internal structure, Sogdiana was exposed to the influence of the great powers of its age. In the third century, under Shapur I, the Sasanians seized Sogdiana up to the Shâsh Mountains, i.e., to the Dzhizak Canyon, northeast of Samarkand, but there are no data on the establishment of prolonged Iranian rule in Sogdiana.[18] In the second half of the fourth century, nomads captured Sogdiana, killed the Sogdian ruler, and founded their own dynasty there. This group may be identified with the Chionites who appeared at that time on the borders of Iran, at a time when Sasanian Iran no longer exercised power in Sogdiana. About A.D. 509 the Hephthalites,[19] a tribe whose origin remains debatable, took possession of Sogdiana. They began their control of extensive regions in Transoxiana, India and Eastern Turkestan from the territory of modern Badakhshān in northern Afghanistan.[20] The Hephthalites arrived in Sogdiana from the south, after the victory over Sasanian Iran which was forced to pay them tribute after the death of Peroz who was killed fighting them (484). The Hephthalite garrisons occupied the forts of the Sogdian cities, as indicated by the conversation of the Sogdian ambassadors with the Byzantine emperor which indicates that the Hephthalites lived in the cities. But the authors, who knew the Hephthalites in the lands of their principal habitation, gave information on their nomadic way of life.

In the 560s, the Hephthalite possessions in Middle Asia were divided between the Sasanian Khusro I and the Turks, who not long before had founded an immense steppe power, the first Turkish khaganate. The struggle between the Turks and the

17. E. V. Zeimal', "Tali-Barzinskii klad monet s izobrazheniem luchnika," *SGÈ* XXXIV (1972), 72–75; idem, "Rannesogdiiskie monety s izobrazheniem Gerakla i Zevsa," *SGÈ* XXXVII (1973), 68–73.

18. V. G. Lukonin, "Zavoevaniia Sasanidov na Vostoke i problemy kushanskoi absoliutnoi khronologii," *VDI* 2 (1969).

19. B.I. Marshak, "K voprosu o vostochnykh protivnikakh Irana v V v.," *Strany i narody Vostoka* X (Moskva 1971), 65.

20. K. Enoki, "On the Nationality of the Ephthalites," *Memoires of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 18 (Tokyo 1959).

Hephthalites corresponds most probably with the time of the social disturbance in Bukhara which resulted in the emigration of the Bukharan aristocracy to areas beyond the Syr Dar'ya. With Turkish support, the latter regained possession of Bukhara, and close relationships were established between the Turks and the Sogdians. The Turkish khagans exerted varying degrees of pressure on Sogdian rulers but steadily protected Sogdian trade and widely employed Sogdian officials and diplomats in their service.[21] In the second half of the seventh century a nominal dependence was established between the Samarkand king Vargoman and other local princes, among whom were sovereigns of Turkish descent, from the T'ang dynasty. In this period, however, Sogdiana succeeded in gaining its independence. Archaeological materials show that throughout the seventh century a genuine flowering of Sogdian cities took place, evidenced in the rapid growth of the capital city of Samarkand. The mass of copper coins of low denominations were issued in this century to serve the needs of local trade.[22] To this period also date the formation of a unified style of ceramics throughout Sogdiana[23] and progress in Sogdian silk weaving[24] and other handicrafts. In the seventh to eighth centuries, Middle Asian merchants dominated the northern branch of the flourishing Great Silk Route that passed along the northern Caucasus,[25] (see map 1) as well as the "fur route" that linked the hunters of the northern Ural region with the eastern frontier and Byzantium.[26] This is affirmed on the one hand by the discovery of Sogdian silks in the northern Caucasus, and on the other by the unearthing of Byzantine and Sasanian silver dishes with Sogdian and Khwarezmian inscriptions in the Urals.

In the seventh to eighth centuries there was an ethnic and cultural expansion of the Sogdians. It is to this time that the real flowering of numerous Sogdian colonies in Semirech'e dates.[27] The fact that the coins issued by the Turkish khagans, the

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21. S. G. Kliashtornyi, *Drevnetiurkskie runicheskie pamiatniki kak istochnik po istorii Srednei Azii* (Moskva 1964), 78–135.

22. O.I. Smirnova, *Katalog monet s gorodishcha Pendzhikent* (Moskva 1963).

23. B. I. Marshak, "Vliianie torevtiki na sogdiiskuiu keramiku VII–VIII vekov," *TGÈ* V (1961).

24. A. A. Ierusalimskaia, "K slozheniiu shkoly khudozhestvennogo shelkotkachestva v Sogde," *Sredniaia Aziia i Iran* (Leningrad 1972).

25. Eadem, "Velikii shelkovyi put' i Severnyi Kavkaz," for the exhibition *Sokrovishcha iskusstva drevnego Irana, Kavkaza i Srednei Azii* (Leningrad 1972).

26. V.I. Raspopova, "Arkheologicheskie dannye o sogdiiskoi torgovle," *KSIA* 138 (1974), 81–82.

27. V.I. Raspopova, "Goncharnye izdeliia sogdiitsev Chuiskoi doliny," *Trudy Kirgizskoi arkheologo-ètnograficheskoi èkspeditsii* IV (Moskva 1960), 141–163.

Khwarezm kings and the rulers of some parts of Tukhāristān and Ferghana bear Sogdian inscriptions indicates the important role played by Sogdians in these areas.

The situation changed with the coming of the Arabs. In the second half of the seventh century the Arabs waged individual campaigns and made forays into Sogdiana from the conquered Iranian territory. The Arabs undertook a planned conquest of Transoxiana in the first decades of the eighth century. The governor-general of Khurāsān, Qutayba b. Muslim, from 706 through 712 conquered Paikent, Bukhara and Samarkand. The local rulers became vassals of the Arabs. Large Arab garrisons were quartered in Bukhara and Samarkand, and this involved the emigration of a considerable number of inhabitants from the cities. Light has been shed on further events, not only by the Arabs, but also by local sources. The archives of Sogdian documents found on Mount Mugh in the upper reaches of the Zeravshan River contain information on events in Sogdiana up to 722.[28] In 722 Devashtich, ruler of Panjikent, who had taken part in one of the uprisings against Arab rule, surrendered in a castle situated on Mount Mugh, and was taken captive by the Arabs in 722. In the 720s and 730s other uprisings threatened Arab power in Sogdiana which had been conquered by the Arabs. In the course of the military actions, many cities and villages fell into a state of neglect and there was mass emigration of the Sogdians. Finally, in 739, the governor-general, Nasr b. Saiyār, made peace with the Sogdians and pardoned them for their tax indebtedness and for their apostasy of the Islamic religion introduced by the Arabs. Nasr b. Saiyār carried out a policy of unity with the local aristocracy.[29]

Soon after, however, the situation changed radically. As a result of the powerful uprising headed by the supporter of the ʿAbbāsids, Abu Muslim, Nasr b. Saiyār was killed, the caliphal dynasty of the Umayyads was overthrown, and the authority of the caliphate passed to the dynasty of the ʿAbbāsids. Abu Muslim was supported not only by the Arabs, but also by representatives of the local nations who began mass conversion to Islam at this precise time. With the ʿAbbāsids, the Middle Asian, including the Sogdian, aristocracy was enlisted in state service. In the second half of the eighth to the first half of the ninth century, many Sogdians migrated to Merv, Nishapur, Baghdad and Samarra. It must be noted that service to the

28. M.N. Bogoliubov, O.I. Smirnova, V.A. Livshits, *Sogdiiskie dokumenty s gory Mug* I–III (Moskva 1962–1963).

29. O.G. Bol'shakov, "Gorod v kontse VIII-nachale XIII v.," in A.M. Belenitskii et al., *Srednevekovyi gorod Srednei Azii* (Moskva 1973), 151–154.

caliph and the official adoption of Islam did not yet indicate a complete break with their former cultural traditions. For example, in the ninth century one of the eminent military leaders of the caliphate, the *afshin* of Ustrushana, refused to permit the destruction of the local temples by Muslims. The Islamization of Ustrushana was apparently completed only after the execution of this *afshin* in 841.[30]

Special Features of the Social Order

Very little is known of the social order of ancient Middle Asia. Due to the excavations at Panjikent and the archives from Mount Mugh we have a better idea of the society of the seventh and beginning of the eighth centuries. Reports of Arab and Chinese authors are very detailed about this period. Scholars who laid the foundation for the study of the history of Middle Asia in order to characterize the pre-Islamic period used comparisons with two eras in European history. On the one hand, they found much that was similar to Western European feudalism, and on the other hand, many features resembling the city-states of ancient Greece. Often the same historian, on different pages of his work, introduced these and other comparisons.[31] Later investigators tended to express in absolute terms a specific concept about Middle Asian society of the pre-Islamic period. For example, S.P. Tolstov thought that slave-holding city-states existed in Middle Asia,[32] whereas A.M. Mandel'shtam and O.I. Smirnova found a developed feudal hierarchy in Sogdiana.[33] It is most probable that Sogdian society corresponded to neither one of these models. The degree of correspondence between the societies compared need not be unnecessarily exaggerated. The fact that the titles of the heads of certain villages often coincided with those of the rulers of whole districts indicates the lack of distinction in the hierarchy of the Sogdian aristocracy. Furthermore, the dynasties were surprisingly unstable. At Samarkand, throughout the period of the seventh and eighth centuries, there was no hereditary succession for more than two generations. There is simply no information on the earlier rulers. Three rulers are known for Panjikent but not one of them was the son of the other. There

30. N. Negmatov, *Ustrushana v drevnosti i rannem srednevekov'e* (Dushanbe 1957), 137–151.

31. W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, 2d ed., (London 1958); idem, *Sochineniia* I (Moskva 1963), 238–241; idem, "Neskol'ko slov ob ariiskoi kul'ture v Srednei Azii," *Sochineniia* II:2 (Moskva 1964), 324–325; H.A.R. Gibb, *The Arab Conquests of Central Asia* (London 1923), 5.

32. S.P. Tolstov, *Drevnii Khorezm* (Moskva 1948), 269–276.

33. A.M. Mandel'shtam, "Sredniaia Aziia v VI–VII vv. n. ė.," in *Istoriia tadzhikskogo naroda* II, Book I (Moskva 1964), 53–59; O.I. Smirnova, *Ocherki iz istorii Sogda* (Moskva 1970), 38–86.

is evidence that two of the rulers of Samarkand were chosen, and in one case it is stated directly that the ruler was put in office by the people. Not only individual masters but also urban communities played a large role in the history of Sogdiana.

Samarkand had no ruler at the time of the first Arab siege. Paikent, near Bukhara, the "City of Merchants," which was of great commercial, political and military importance, was never ruled by a sovereign. Finally, from the documents of Mount Mugh, we know that the people of Panjikent ($\eta'\beta$), and not Devashtich, the ruler of Panjikent, received duty for the use of the bridge.[34] Panjikent had its own income and its own officials.

It should be noted that among the northern neighbors of Sogdiana, the Khwarezmians, the word $\eta'f$ meant "city," and that the words *b'rc p'rwzd* $\eta'f$ "the city was fortified," were translated into Arabic by *hasunati-l-madinatu*, and into Persian by *ustuvār šud šahr.*[35] When the Sogdians listed the classes included in $\eta'\beta$, they mentioned the aristocracy (azats), the merchants and the workers.[36] The term *āzāt*, however, in legal contexts simply meant free, in contrast to a slave or a dependent person.[37] We know that a number of small communities were dependent upon larger ones, but there is no information on true vassalage nor on fiefs for service.

The large aristocracy was mainly concentrated in the cities. At Panjikent, a small city with an area of 13.5 hectares (fig. 1), the excavated third of the city (about 130 houses) revealed that every third house was once adorned with superbly executed painting and no less skillful wood carving. These houses were two- to three-storied and had many rooms, and contained principal halls, resembling miniature palaces (fig. 2). The palace of Devashtich, excavated on the citadel, is similar in structure and arrangement to the residences of the wealthy city dwellers, differing from them only in the greater number of rooms.

It is possible that there were a number of reasons for such an abundance of aristocracy at Panjikent. Here, apparently, settled the rich citizens of Samarkand who were forced, in 712, to abandon the central part of their city which was occupied by the Arabs. Many houses of this type, however, had been constructed at Panjikent before this period. Despite the conditions created by such circum-

34. Legal Documents and Letters. Reading, Translation and Commentaries by V. A. Livshits, in *Sogdiiskie dokumenty* II (Moskva 1962), 69.

35. Economic Documents. Reading, Translation and Commentaries by M. N. Bogoliubov and O. I. Smirnova, in *Sogdiiskie dokumenty* III (Moskva 1963), 72.

36. Legal Documents and Letters in Livshits, *Sogdiiskie dokumenty*, 94–96.

37. Ibid., 17–38.

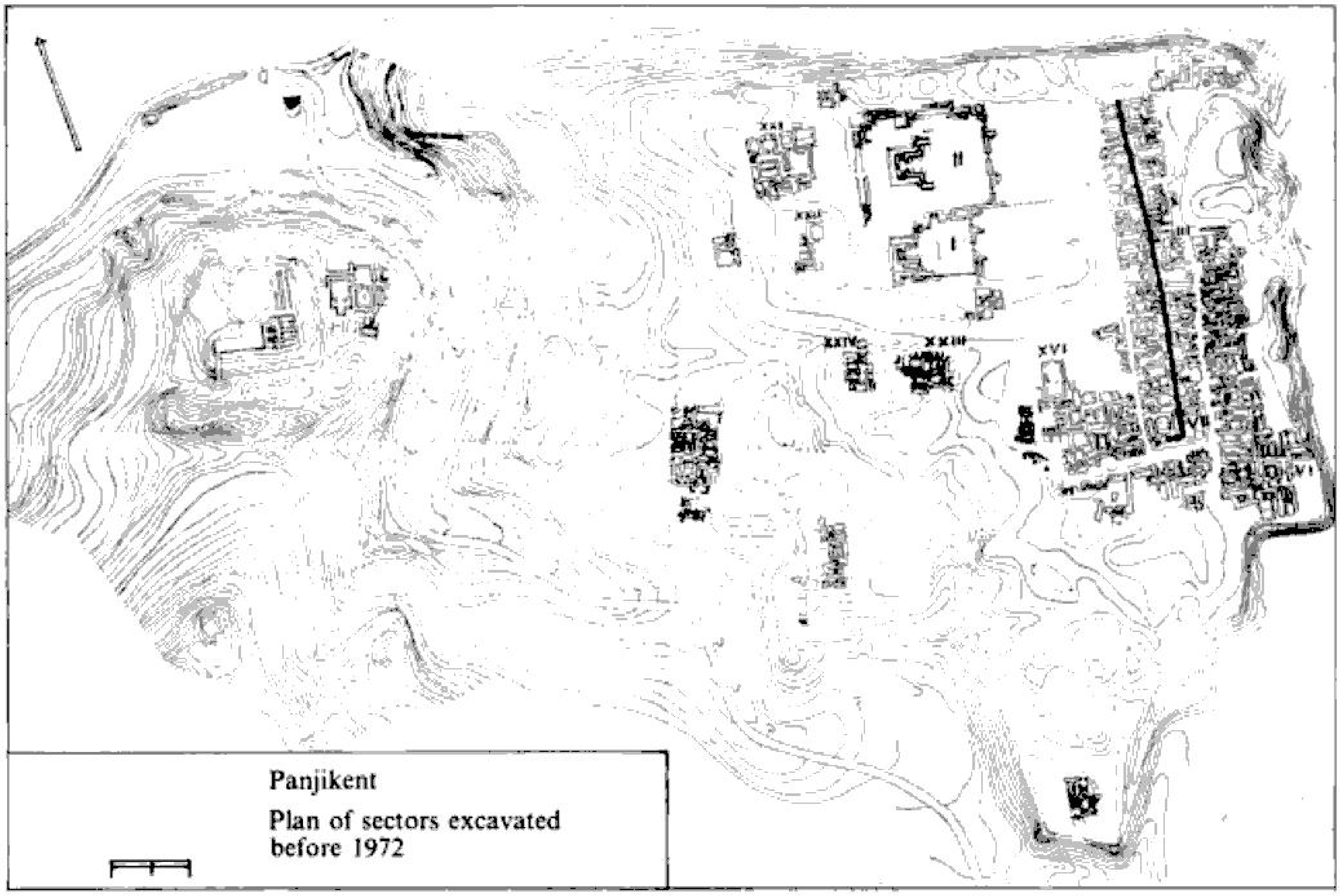

Figure 1. Plan of ancient town of Panjikent showing sectors excavated before 1973.

stances, one must acknowledge the predominance in the city $\eta'\beta$ of the landed and commercial aristocracy who may be compared with the patricians of medieval European towns.

A large number of shops and craftsmen's workshops were also discovered at Panjikent along major streets and in special bazaars which have yielded large quantities of coins. The handicraft stores and shops were of small dimensions and were thus intended for single occupancy. These facilities and entire commercial stalls as well as the wealthy homes, however, were planned and constructed without provision for passage between shops and residences. It may be assumed that the stalls and bazaars belonged to the owners of the homes and were leased to

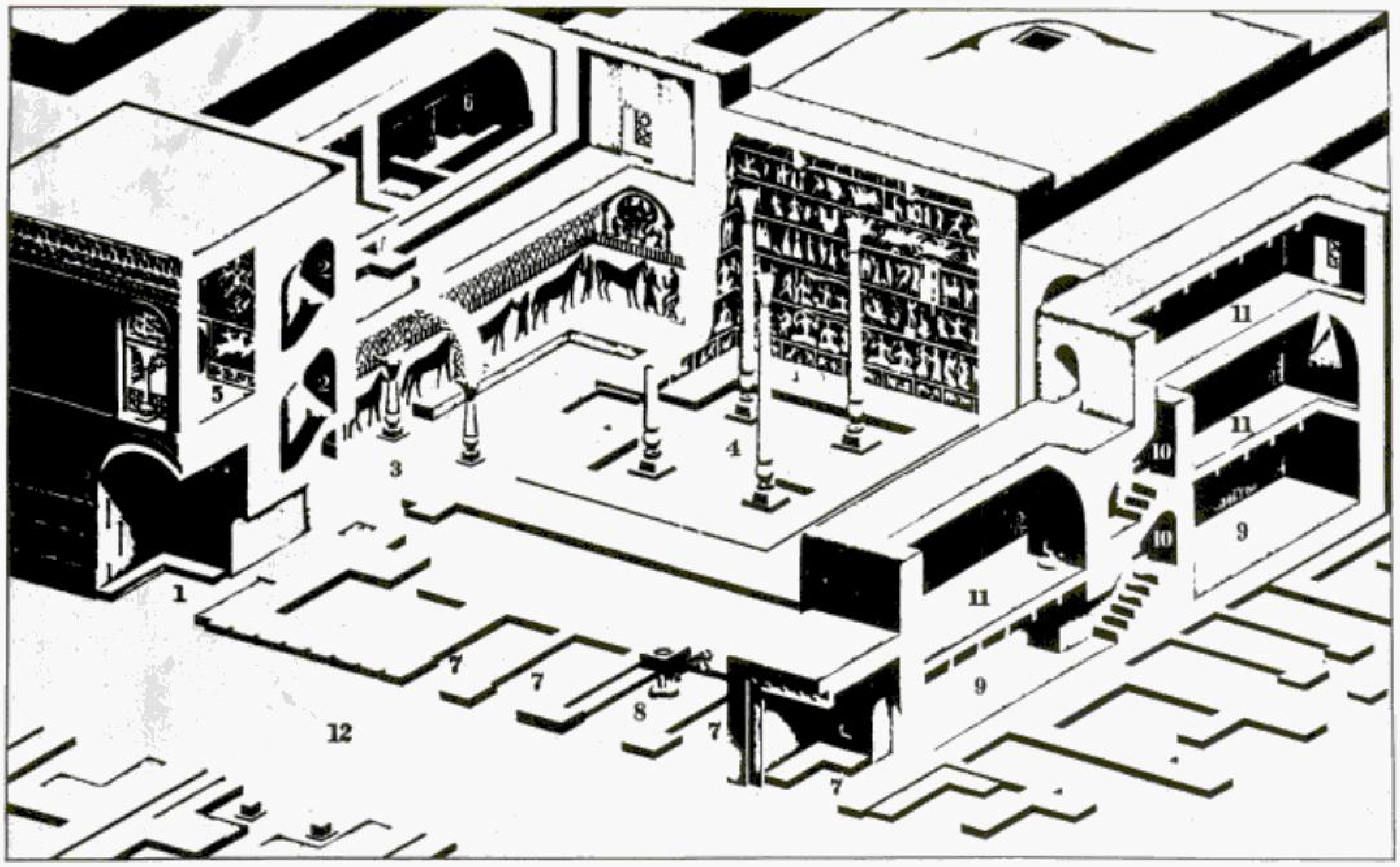

Figure 2. Living quarters of Panjikent datable to the eighth century. (1) Entrance eivān, *(2) ramp, (3) corridor with painting, (4) main hall, (5) main room of the second story, (6) houskeeping facilities of the second story, (7) shops and workshops; (8) forge, (9) room on the first floor in the home of an ordinary citizen, (12) street. Reconstruction by L.L. Gurevich.*

craftsmen and small-scale tradesmen.[38] This assumption is borne out by the occurrence of lease terms in Sogdian written sources.[39]

In contrast to the aristocrats and merchants, the craftsmen and small-scale tradesmen lived modestly, although their homes also had two stories and several rooms.

38. V.I. Raspopova, "Odin iz bazarov Pendzhikenta VII–VIII vv.," *Strany i narody Vostoka* X (Moskva 1971), 72–74.

39. Legal Documents and Letters in Livshits, *Sogdiiskie dokumenty*, 56–63.

Sometimes the architecture of their living quarters imitated, on a small scale, the principal halls of the wealthy homes,[40] exemplified by the use of wall painting in a niche from a modest residence. The smaller homes as a rule had no shops or workshops. The city craftsmen sold the products of their work freely. Yet the effective demand for their items was to a considerable extent ensured by the urban aristocracy with its numerous retainers, and its military detachments of so-called Chakirs, and by "foreign" caravan traders controlled by merchants. Documents from Mount Mugh and the results of granary excavations show that the supplies of raw materials and commercial grain were at the disposal of the aristocracy.

The basic stratification of the urban population, with respect to the way of life, did not coincide with the stratification of the aristocracy (feudal lords) and the tradesmen and craftsmen. A precise boundary was set down between the aristocracy and the merchants, on the one hand, and the craftsmen and small-scale tradesmen, included among the "workers" (*κ'rγg'r*), on the other hand.

The rural areas have not been studied as well as the cities. It is known that the rural population was obligated to make payment in kind and in service to the owners of the settlements. It is known that communities called *η'β* also existed there. Several castles of landowners of the fifth to eighth centuries were studied. A mountain village, located on a hillside at the foot of a castle from the end of the seventh–first quarter of the eighth century (Gardan-i-Hissar) in the territory of the domain of Devashtich (near Mount Mugh),[41] was completely excavated. The houses of this village were not like the city houses, but resembled the rural dwellings of the mountain Tajiks of the end of the nineteenth century. The palace of the ruler, with respect to architecture and decoration, resembled the residences of the wealthy citizens. The situation on the plains, however, still remains unclear. There is no doubt that this entire picture does not correspond to the slave-holding hypothesis but of course in the social relationships of the Sogdian cities, almost every one of which was a focal point of the wealth and social life of the large state, there are in reality features in common with the city-states of antiquity. While one may speak of the predominance of feudalistic features in the social order of Sogdiana of the early middle ages, and this viewpoint is favored by contemporary investigators, it would be inaccurate to designate as feudal Sogdian works of art found in the home of each wealthy citizen. In spite of the fact that there were

40. V.I. Raspopova, "Kvartal zhilishch riadovykh gorozhan Pendzhikenta VII–VIII vv.," *SA* I (1969), 177.
41. IU. IAkubov, "Gardani-Khisor," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1974 goda*, 546.

Figure 3. Main hall of a Panjikent home. At bottom, a mural depicting a goddess and donors. Reconstruction by L.L. Gurevich.

paintings in the palaces of the rulers (but not substantially superior to those in the private homes), this art belongs primarily to the upper strata of the city.

The polysemous word, $\eta'\beta$, meant not only "persons," "the people," but also the municipal or village community. This word, in addition, also designated family united by a common cult and a community of legal and property interests.[42]

42. A.G. Perikhanian, "Agnaticheskie gruppy v drevnem Irane," *VDI* 3 (1968), 34–50.

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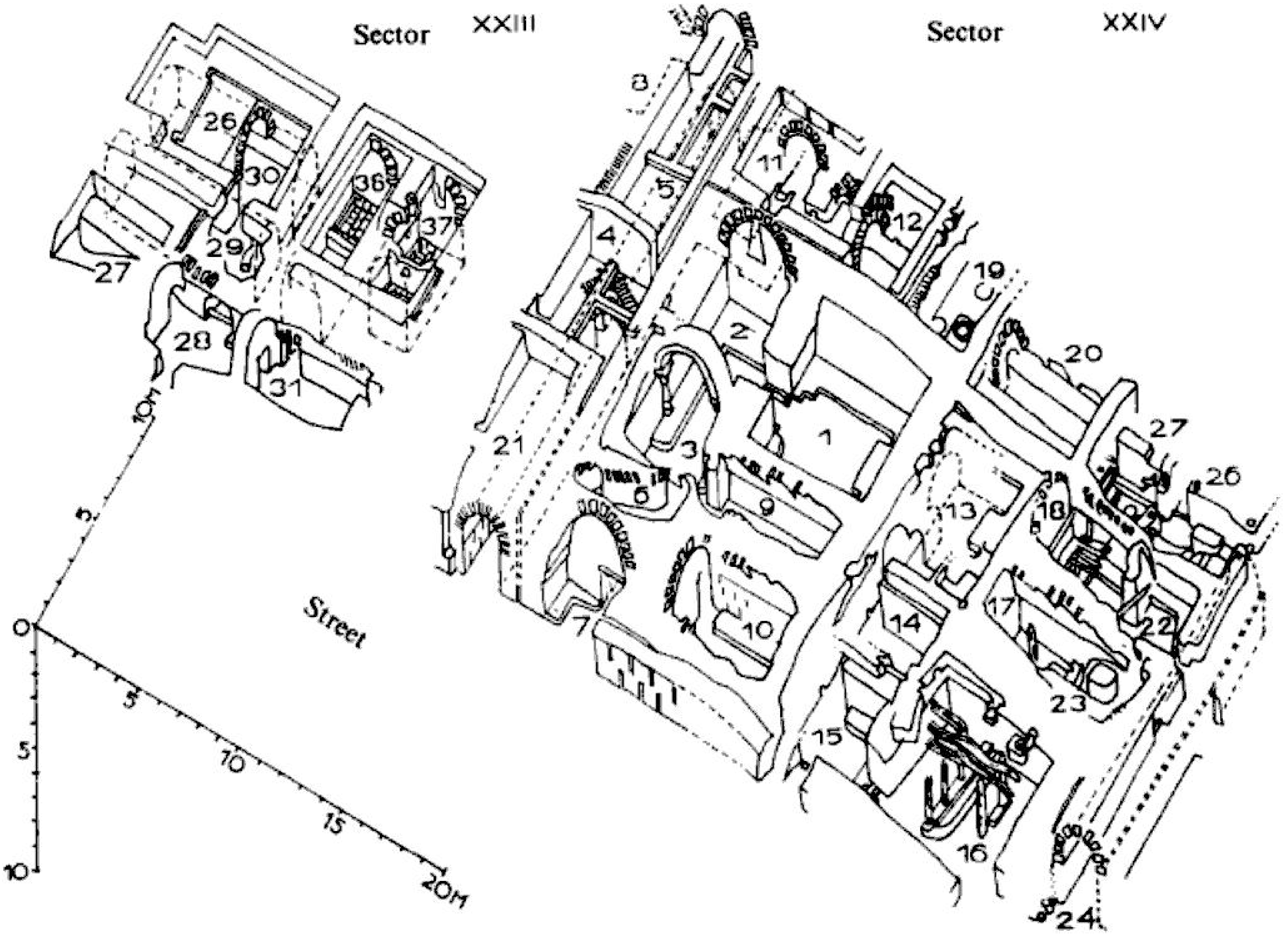

Figure 4. Excavations of living quarters of Panjikent XXIII *and* XXIV. Rooms 21, 4, 5 *and* 24 *are narrow streets, covered with arches with second stories above the narrow streets.*

Dependent persons and slaves, as A.G. Perikhanian showed, were also included in this $\eta'\beta$. The individual family also constituted a strong nucleus of society. Each of these subdivisions of the social organism was to a certain extent similar to the rest, since on the level of the family, $\eta'\beta$ of the agnates and the city $\eta'\beta$, social life was embodied in similar rites, holidays and ceremonial meetings. While the city $\eta'\beta$ gathered at the temples for all of these, the members of the $\eta'\beta$ of the ruler, i.e.,

his relatives and servants, gathered in the main halls of the palaces, and the members of the aristocratic families met in the principal halls of their homes. For this reason, the same subject matter is present in the murals of all three types of buildings. The theme of the conveyance of fire in a special vessel and its presentation to the image of the deity, and sacrifice at the portable altar (fig. 3) is persistently repeated. Yet, the number, sex and clothing of the attendants are subject to variation.

The special characteristics of the plan of the old city of Panjikent, strange at first sight, are explained by the accelerated development of its social life. Density of construction, most striking at Panjikent, is demonstrated by the almost complete absence of courtyards, dense rows of two or three-story houses, covered lanes, over which were built one or two more stories, narrow streets and tiny shops and workshops (fig. 4). The compact dimensions of the domestic and commercial quarters stand in sharp contrast to the spacious layout of courtyards of temples and the principal halls of aristocractic dwellings.

Sogdian society was distinguished on the whole by a highly developed economy and culture and a weak state system with almost complete absence of centralization. Sogdian political organization followed the pattern of societies along the "barbarian fringes" of the ancient world.[43] It did not develop along the lines of the ancient oriental despotic states. Although such a peripheral state was susceptible to impulses generated by neighboring empires and gradually ceased to be "barbaric," its administrative-state institutions were weak. The socio-political patterns of the primitive communities were not abandoned under the pressure of the powerful state, but were gradually adapted to the needs of a stratified society, and thus preserved their peculiar identity.

The Nature of the Cultural Relations of Sogdiana

The social order of Sogdiana determined the direction of its cultural history. The Sogdians were acquainted with the cultural patterns of the neighboring countries, but gave their own interpretation to adopted concepts and expressions. This was manifested in the religious history of Sogdiana. The initial paganism, with worship of the general Iranian and local deities, was strongly influenced by Zoroastrianism.[44] Arab-Persian authors, including such an expert on local beliefs and customs

43. E. Zeimal', "'Varvarskie podrazhaniia' kak istoricheskii istochnik," op. cit., 60–61.
44. W.B. Henning, "A Sogdian God," *BSOAS* XXVIII:2 (1965), 250.

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as al-Biruni, Khwarezmian by descent, call the Sogdian and Khwarezmian priests "Majūs," like the priests of Sasanian Iran. In Sogdiana, however, along with the fire temples which archaeologists have not so far succeeded in finding, the sources mention temples for idols, apparently similar to those discovered at Panjikent. The originality of the architecture of these temples and Sogdian religious iconography indicate the absence of orthodox Sasanian Zoroastrianism from Sogdiana. The official imperial art of the Sasanians was known to the Sogdians through original works of art as well as from Hephthalite imitations. Such works of art were brought to Sogdiana as Hephthalite booty[45] and by emigrants fleeing the Arabs or through goods and items transported via the trade route. Many artistic devices of the Sasanian masters were assimilated in Sogdiana but the subject matter of Sasanian art was reinterpreted. For example, a king's portrait was used to create the model for a deity on a throne, and a king's hunt was transformed into an informal hunting scene or into a mythological scene depicting the struggle of a god with a monster. It is not by chance that the Sogdian toreutic artists who assimilated Sasanian patterns did not once portray rulers on their wares.[46] "Royal life" in Sogdiana was not an expression of official grandeur but a reflection of the luxurious life of affluent men.

Sogdiana's relations with Iran were implemented mainly through unofficial channels. The communities of the Manichaeans and the Nestorian Christians, who had come to Sogdiana as emigrants from Sasanian Iran and found there many proselytes,[47] undoubtedly did not break their ties with their cobelievers. Among the Manichaeans and the Christians there were artists and craftsmen, and with them were books, apparently including illustrated ones. Intensive work on the translation of books was probably not limited to religious works. The Christians, in particular, contributed to the arousal of interest in Middle Asia in the Roman-Byzantine culture, the manifestations of which are particularly noticeable in the shapes and decoration of the Sogdian silver vessels.

Among the most interesting narrative paintings of Middle Asia of the eighth century are the "Exploits of Rustam,"[48] from Panjikent, and "The History of

45. B.I. Marshak, IA. K. Krikis, "Chilekskie chashi," *TGE* X (1969), 77.

46. B.I. Marshak, *Sogdiiskoe serebro* (Moskva 1971).

47. A.M. Belenitskii, "Voprosy ideologii i kul'tov Sogda (po materialam pendzhikentskikh khramov)," *Zhivopis' drevnego Piandzhikenta* (Moskva 1954), 36–52; A.M. Belenitskii et al., "Raskopki drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1973 goda* (Moskva 1974), 515.

48. A. Belenitsky, *Central Asia* (Geneva 1968), 188, pls. 136–138; A.M. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta* (Moskva 1973), 47, pls. 7, 9–14.

Romulus and Remus,"[49] from Shahristan. The preserved Sogdian fragment of the Rustam legend, incidentally, is a translation of a Sasanian work.[50] The "Romulus and Remus" theme depicted in the murals from Shahristan includes individuals dressed in strange clothing (exotic for Middle Asia) and naked figures, rarely found in Sogdian art, which indicated that the artists intended to portray an alien land. We note that the subject of the she-wolf and the two infant boys depicted in the Shahristan mural and on a Panjikent gold bracteate (with an imitation of the Latin inscription),[51] was copied from a western model rather than from carved gems of Persian origin. Among the works of the Middle Asian toreutic artists is a dish with Christian scenes from the Holy Writ (the Book of Joshua b. Nun).[52] The Panjikent murals also depict scenes from an Indian epic, showing a Brahman playing dice with the ruler, a chariot approaching the gates of the palace, and a procession of troops with horses and an elephant.[53] This subject resembles certain episodes of the Mahābhārata (from Book IV of the "Virāta-parvan"). The ties with India are shown particularly clearly in the cultural patterns of Sogdiana. Buddhism, which obtained wide recognition,[54] penetrated Sogdiana in the first centuries A.D. Buddhism took such firm root in Sogdiana that a number of Buddhist terms entered the Sogdian language and were later used by the Manichaeans in their own religious texts.[55] Whence and when Buddhism arrived in Sogdiana is not so important for our subject. Its importance lies only in the fact that Buddhist communities maintained relations with their homeland, India, and served as the channel through which Indian literature and art penetrated Sogdiana.

Foreign religions found the greatest response in the Sogdian colonies. But in the ancient city communities of central Sogdiana the decline of Buddhism began not

49. Negmatov, "Êmblema Rima," *Izv. AN TadzhSSR* 1 (71) (1973); idem, "K voprosu o roli Vostoka," ibid. 1 (75) (1974); idem, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov," *SA* 3 (1973), 200–202, figs. 15, 16.

50. S.G. Kljaštornyj, V.A. Livšic, "The Sogdian Inscription of Bugut Revised," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* XXVI:1 (1972), 84.

51. A.M. Belenitskii, "Obshchie rezul'taty raskopok gorodishcha drevnego Pendzhikenta (1951–1953)," *MIA* 66 (1958), 135, fig. 33:3.

52. V.P. Darkevich, B.I. Marshak, "O tak nazyvaemom siriiskom bliude iz Permskoi oblasti," *SA* 2 (1974).

53. A.M. Belenitskii et al., *Skul'ptura*, pls. XI–XVIII.

54. B. A. Litvinsky, *Outline History of Buddhism in Central Asia*, International conference on the history, archaeology and culture of Central Asia in the Kushan period, Moscow 1968; Litvinskii, Zeimal', *Adzhina-tepe*, 110–130, 238–242.

55. J. P. Assmussen, "X^{u}astvānift," *Studies in Manichaeism, Acta Teologica Danica* VII (Copenhagen 1965), 136–147.

later than the seventh century when the local inhabitants of Sogdiana evidently adopted a hostile attitude toward Buddhist monks. Not a single text has reached us pertaining to the local Sogdian religion which conquered Buddhism, but its iconography is found in Sogdian paintings which have not so far yielded a single depiction of the Buddha. For all its receptiveness to external stimuli, Sogdiana preserved its cultural and social patterns. Foreign features were invariably re-interpreted. When Buddhism came and brought along with it the worship of Indian deities, the Sogdians, who adopted the cult of the five gods, Brahmā, Indra, Mahādeva (Śiva), Nārāyaṇa and Vaiśravana, identified the first three gods with members of their own pantheon. They identified Brahmā with Zrvān (*'zrω'*), Indra with Adbag (''δδβγ) and Mahādeva with Veshparkar (*wyšprkr*). Therefore, a new list appeared: Zrvān, Adbag, Veshparkar, Nārāyaṇa and Vaiśravaṇa, whose iconographies are described in a Sogdian text. The Indian iconography of Brahmā, Indra and Śiva-Mahādeva are repeated: Brahmā-Zrvān

Figure 5. The Sogdian god Veshparkar. Sketch of mural from Panjikent XXII : 1. *eighth century.*

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has a great beard, Indra-Adbag has a third eye, Mahādeva-Veshparkar has three faces, etc. The Indianized iconography, adopted in the art of Buddhist Sogdians outlived the Buddhist religion that had served as the vehicle for its dissemination. Thus after the anti-Buddhist reaction in Sogdiana, the non-Buddhist artists of Panjikent and Shahristan continued to model the local god Veshparkar after the image of the three-headed Śiva (fig. 5). V.A. Livshits read the inscription at the foot of a Panjikent figure of the three-headed god as *ωšpr* (*kr*), and identified the Panjikent deity with Veshparkar. H. Humbach did not know of this reading when he compared the Sogdian Veshparkar with the Bactrian *Wēš* (OĒŠO), noting that OĒŠO was also portrayed on Kushan coins in the form of the three-headed Śiva.[56] While leaving it to linguists to judge the correctness of the etymology suggested by H. Humbach, we should note the correspondence between the iconography and names of the Sogdian and Bactrian gods.

Indian features in the iconography of other Sogdian gods may also be regarded as the heritage of the Buddhist period. For example, the Sogdian four-armed goddess, riding a lion, iconographically goes back to Pārvatī, Śiva's wife. It should be noted that the goddess Nanā, worshipped in Middle Asia, and sometimes portrayed on Kushan coins as riding a lion, was regarded in the Kushan period as the wife of Veś-Śiva.[57] The goddess seated on a throne adorned with lions, depicted near Veshparkar at Panjikent, may be identified with the goddess on the lion vehicle. The often-expressed theory that the Sogdian goddess on the lion is also Nanā (Nanaia)[58] may apparently be accepted.

It is characteristic that the Sogdians recognized only three male deities to whom they probably ascribed distinctive qualities. A mural from a house at Panjikent depicts a throne with legs in the form of winged rams on which stand three portable sacrificial fire altars.[59] Gods were depicted on the supports of the sacrificial

56. H. Humbach, "Vayu, Śiva und der Spiritus Vivens im ost-iranischen Synkretismus," *Acta Iranica, Monumentum H.S. Nyberg* I (Leiden 1975), 397–409. See below n. 135.

57. K.V. Trever, "Zolotaia statuėtka iz seleniia Khait (Tadzhikistan). (K voprosu o Kushanskom panteone)," *TGĖ* II (1958), 143, fig. 11; E.V. Zeimal', *Kushanskoe tsarstvo po numizmaticheskim dannym* (Leningrad 1965) (rukopis'), ch. VI, section 2; P. Gardner, *Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum* (London 1886), pl. XXIII:1; J.M. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1967), 94.

58. N.V. D'iakonova, O.I. Smirnova, "K voprosu o kul'te Nany (Anakhity) v Sogde," *SA* 1 (1967); G. Azarpay, "Chetyrekhrukaia boginia: kushanskii perezhitok v srednevekovom iskusstve Srednei Azii?," *Tsentral'naia Aziia v kushanskuiu ėpokhu* II (Moskva 1975).

59. A.M. Belenitskii, "Ob arkheologicheskikh rabotakh Pendzhikentskogo otriada v 1958 g.," *Trudy Instituta istorii im. A. Donisha Akademii nauk Tadzhikskoi SSR* XXVII (Dushanbe 1961), 96–98.

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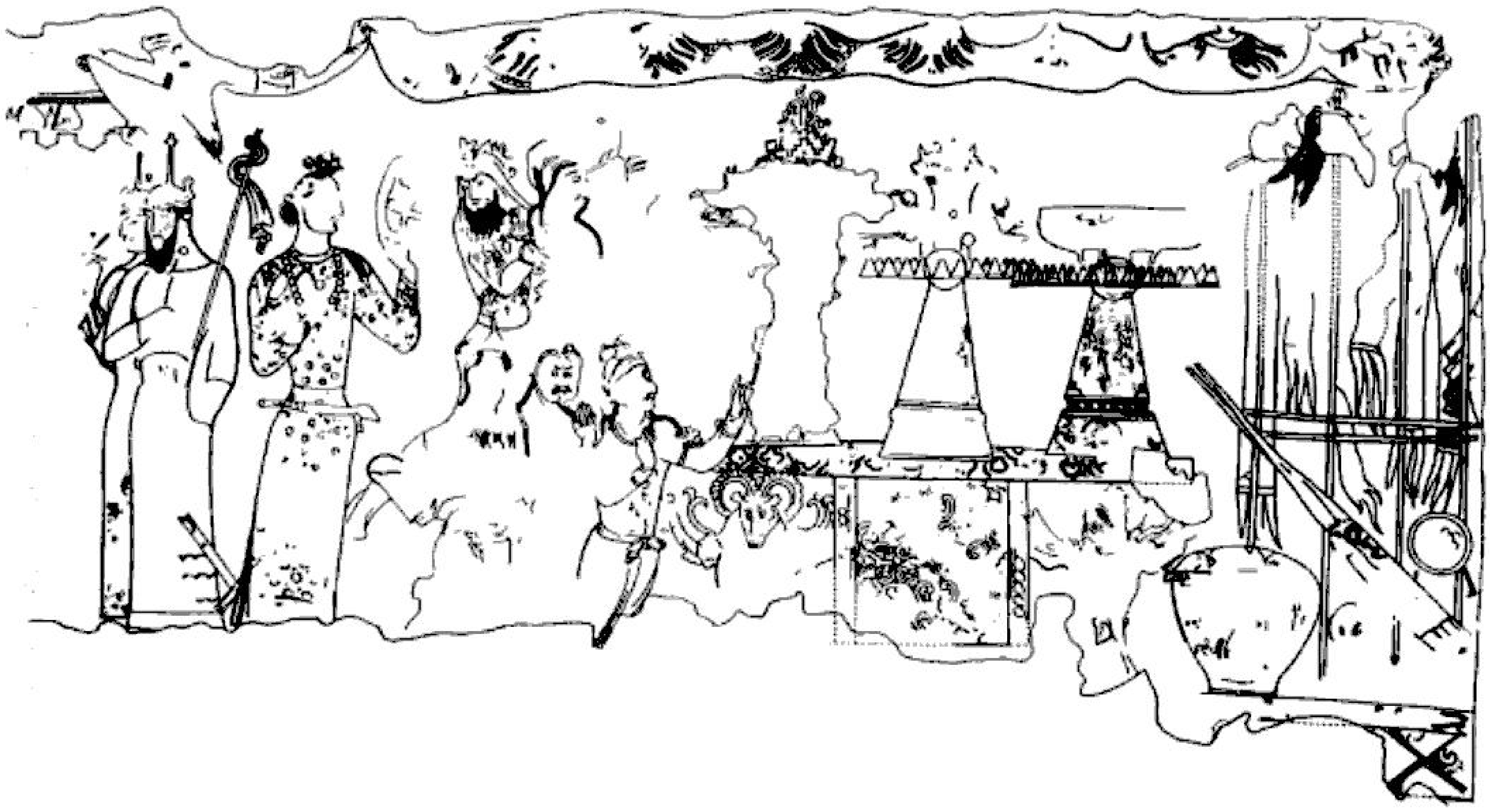

Figure 6. Sacrificial altars on a throne. Sketch of mural from the western wall of Panjikent III:6. *Eighth century.*

altars, but this depiction was fairly well preserved on only one of the altar supports which shows Veshparkar, the third member of the principal triad (fig. 6). It would appear that the other two sacrificial altars were related to Zrvān and Adbag.

Adbag, the "great god," is obviously the name for Ahura Mazdā, the use of whose name was avoided by the Sogdians. He was portrayed as Indra, the ruler of the gods. Sogdian painting apparently depicts the equivalent of Indra's image. One of the halls of the palace at Varakhsha is distinguished by its unusual architecture and paintings. This is the so-called Red Hall which contains a high platform for sacrificial fire and a pedestal from a wooden structure which has not been preserved.[60] The murals in the Red Hall constituted three tiers. The upper tier showed paradise with trees guarded by griffins and the center register showed walking beasts. Since Sogdian and Khwarezmian gods were usually depicted on

60. Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, 54–59, 152–153.

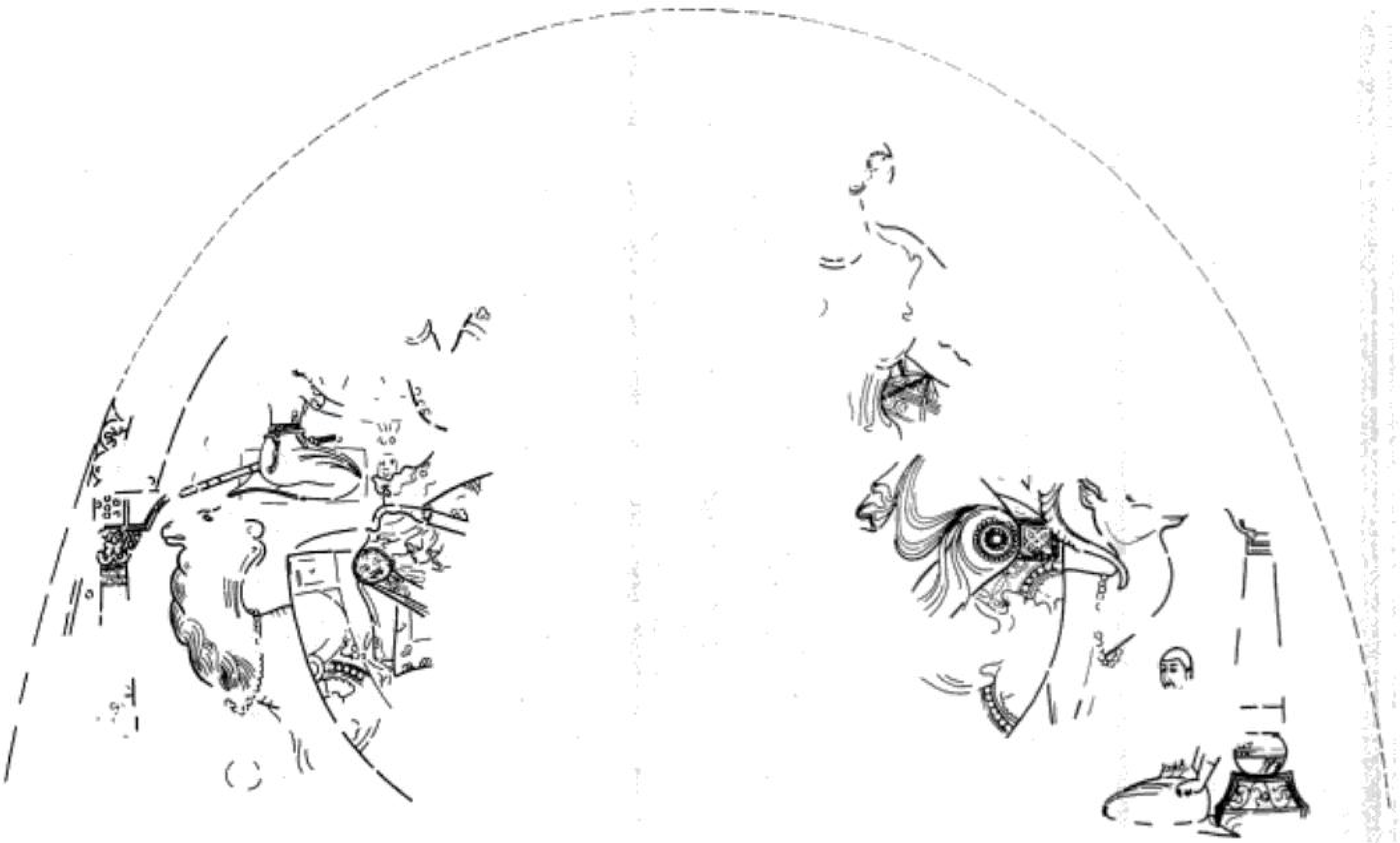

Figure 7. Enthroned deities. Sketch of mural from Panjikent XXIV : 2. *Eighth century.*

the backs of such beasts, the animals may have symbolized the gods. Among the beasts are a mountain goat, a deer, a tiger with a saddle blanket, a lion with a stirrup, a leopard, also with a stirrup, a griffin and a camel. The lowest tier depicted several scenes, in which a crowned rider, dressed in Indian fashion, was shown in conflict with lions, tigers, leopards and griffins. The rider is seated on an elephant guided by a driver. In this case, the figure of the crowned rider is disproportionately large; he is almost equal to the elephant, whereas the figure of the driver is kept in the correct relative scale.

V. A. Shishkin posed the question as to whether an epic hero or a god was depicted here.[61] On the basis of our present knowledge of Sogdian epic representations in which the cause and effect relationship between adjacent scenes is always

61. Ibid., 204–205.

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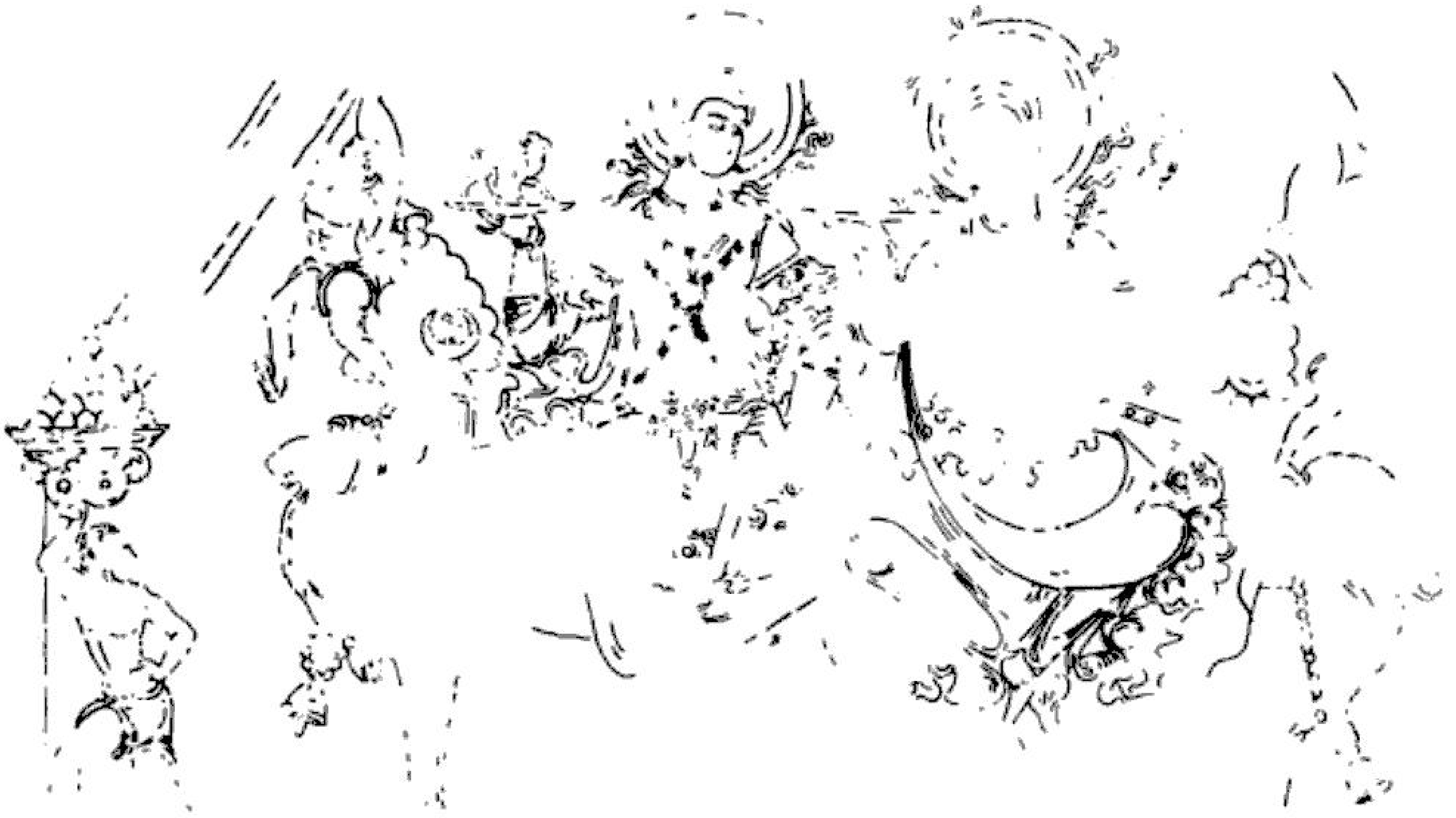

Figure 8. Enthroned deities. Sketch of mural from Panjikent XXIV : 13. *Eighth century*

emphasized, we can reject the first of these two possibilities. Furthermore, the cult explanation for the scene is borne out by the entire context of the architecture and murals of the Red Hall as well as by the Indian attire of the principal personage which identify him either as an epic hero or a deity. In accordance with Indian iconography, Indra, who is the equivalent of Adbag, would be portrayed on the elephant. The decisive argument in favor of the identification of this personage with Adbag would be the presence of the third eye, but unfortunately, the face in the painting is poorly preserved. On the preserved part of the forehead, however, there are strokes in which it is difficult to see anything other than the ends of lines, pertaining to a third eye.[62]

As for Zrvān, whom the Sogdians especially worshipped, he apparently had a

62. Ibid., pl. V; V. A. Shishkin, "Varakhsha (Predvaritel'noe soobshchenie o rabotakh 1949–1953 gg.)," *SA* XXIII (1955), fig. II.

non-Indian iconography, which was evidenced on the Biia-naiman ossuaries from western Sogdiana.[63] The old man, seated on a throne with a hatchet in his hand, resembled the Indian Brahmā only because of his long beard. This iconography comes from Near Eastern astrological depictions.

When they became Buddhists, the Sogdians included in the Buddhist pantheon those of their gods for whom they found no Indian equivalents. For example, among the plaques made of gilded bronze found in a Buddhist temple of the eighth century built by Sogdians in Semirech'e (Ak-Beshim),[64] there are not only depictions of the Buddha but also representations of a pair of male and female deities depicted with an outstretched hand holding a small image of a camel. This same

Figure 9. Deity with the figure of a camel. Terra-cotta from Panjikent. Sixth century. The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad.

63. A.IA. Borisov, "K istolkovaniiu izobrazhenii na biia-naimanskikh ossuariiakh," *Trudy otdela Vostoka Gosudarstvennogo Ėrmitazha* II (Leningrad 1940), 43–45.

64. Kyzlasov, "Arkheologicheskie issledovaniia na gorodishche Ak-Beshim," op. cit., 203, 209, figs. 29:4.

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pair of deities occurs in a non-Buddhist context at Afrasiab (sixth century)[65] and at Panjikent (eighth century)[66] (figs. 7, 8). The male deity (without his wife) is depicted at Panjikent (sixth century)[67] (fig. 9), and at Varakhsha (eighth century).[68]

After the decline of Buddhism, which had never been completely dominant in Sogdiana, the Sogdians continued to depict, according to the Indian iconographic pattern, those of their gods who were equated by Buddhists with Indian gods. The Indian iconography, however, was now transferred to the local cults. On the basis of the foregoing study, it would appear that despite their receptiveness to external influences and to the achievements of neighboring civilizations, the Sogdians preserved their own cultural identity, just as they retained their own social traditions under foreign rule.

Archaeological Substantiations of the Dates of the Panjikent Murals

The problem of dating the wall paintings is rather complex. Many of the special characteristics of the paintings, which at first appeared to be reliable chronological indices, later lost their chronological value. For example, it was thought that the white primecoat and the use of ultramarine were characteristics only of paintings of the seventh and eighth centuries.[69] It later turned out, however, that ultramarine was widely used as early as the Kushan period,[70] and that a white primecoat was used in the early paintings of Panjikent. In addition, the absence of a primecoat is not as a rule a special feature of the technique, but the result of the extreme erosion of the paintings. Thus, when the primecoating dissolved, as a result of erosion, the layer of paint which was partially washed off with the primecoat was still retained directly on the clay coating.

It is also impossible to date paintings according to the presence (or absence) of the

65. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, pl. II (pomeshchenie IX).

66. A. Belenitskii, B. Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi, otkrytye Pendzhikente v 1971 godu," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 61–62; A.M. Belenitskii, "Raskopki na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1972 goda* (Moskva 1973), 487.

67. A.M. Belenitski, B.I. Marshak, "L'art de Piandjikent à la lumière des dernières fouilles (1958–1968)," *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 14.

68. Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, pl. XIV.

69. P.I. Kostrov, "Tekhnika zhivopisi i konservatsii rospisei drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Zhivopis'*, 173–188.

70. B.IA. Staviskii, *Iskusstvo Srednei Azii. Drevnii period, VI v. do n. é.–VIII v. n. é.* (Moskva 1974), 103–107, figs. 80–81.

use of plastic modeling. It should be noted that the tonal effect of plastic modeling often disappears in the course of the destruction of a mural, which frequently preserves only the linear sketch with remnants of color. As a rule, however, only the preliminary sketch, applied before the color, is preserved in such cases. Thus, fragments of murals that had fallen from walls occasionally displayed different degrees of destruction, and different conditions may cause the loss of color on the arm of a figure whose other arm may still display traces of plastic modeling. Since the varied state of preservation was very often taken as an indication of a difference in technique or style, it must be agreed that technical and stylistic features should not play the main role in dating paintings.

Although dating from the realia depicted in the murals retains a certain importance, archaeological methods, of which the most rigid is the stratigraphical method, remain the most reliable means of dating the murals. Only at Panjikent, among the Sogdian cities, has the sequence of layers been studied in detail. Since the walls of the city buildings are made of clay or unfired brick, it would be inaccurate to speak of layers in the ordinary sense of the word for Middle Asia. These materials are easily washed away by water and readily yield to alterations, but they are practically eternal if protected from the effects of moisture. Many walls datable to the fifth through the eighth centuries, were, therefore, preserved at Panjikent. Some of the early walls even preserved traces of murals. Some walls were broken during repairs and others were preserved with new additions. New walls were usually constructed on the highest level and not on the lower levels of earlier walls. A layer between the floors accumulated in time from one construction to the next. The findings in this layer, and the deposit of the new wall establish for a given wall the *terminus post quem* (i.e., simultaneously the *terminus ante quem* for the first wall). The *terminus ante quem* may be established for the new wall on the basis of findings above the new floor.

Among the findings in the structures at Panjikent were thousands of coins, which made it possible to distinguish, almost throughout the entire city, the layer deposited in the first decades of the eighth century. Numerous traces of fires were observed in it. It may be considered, with sufficient substantiation, that these fires were related to the well-known campaign of the Arabs against the Panjikent sovereign, Devashtich, in 722. The layer of deposit from the erosion of the walls and the vaults as a rule lay higher. Still higher, in a number of houses, was a layer with coins of the Samarkand king, Turgar, who came to the throne in 738. At that time many homes were renovated, and some of the repaired walls and repaired coatings

of the old walls were decorated.[71] In some of the buildings another layer, with Arab coins, has been distinguished. The inscriptions on these coins indicated that the coins were issued until 770. This layer is characterized by the absence of new painting and traces of the deliberate destruction of murals of earlier buildings. The renovation of the houses is apparently connected with the above-mentioned conciliatory policy of Nasr b. Saiyār (about 740),[72] and the characteristics of the latter layer reflect the Islamization of the population in the era after Abu Muslim. It is, however, impossible to determine the relative dates of those houses in which the layers are only slightly marked.

The construction of the buildings which burned in 722 was formerly dated to the seventh century, which was also reflected in the published dates for the accompanying wall paintings. Now, however, it has been possible to reveal that a very large number of these houses were built approximately ten years before the fire, and some were still incomplete at the moment of the fire. Coins from the end of the seventh century were sometimes found under the walls and floors of such houses and this helped to date their construction. The entire block (*sectors III, VII*), with repeatedly published paintings, as it turned out, was completely rebuilt after the demolition of the earlier structures along the long axis of the block of the original eastern wall of the city[73] (fig. 1). This original wall, constructed when the city was founded, became an inner wall when a new line of fortifications was erected still farther to the east. But even though it was inside the city, it retained a defensive significance, since it was repaired and reinforced several times (fig. 10). The last repair can be dated by coins from the seams of the masonry. These are coins of Vargoman, who ruled in the third quarter of the seventh century, and of the Panjikent ruler, Chakin Chur Bilga, who came to the throne not later than 690.[74] Therefore, the last (quite extensive) repair of the wall took place no earlier than the last decades of the seventh century. The demolition of the wall and reconstruction of the houses on the freed territory dates to the period between the end of the seventh century and 722. The wall was probably demolished at the beginning of

71. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGE* XXXVII (1973), 61–64 (Sector XXIV); Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, pls. 23–34 (Sector XXI), etc.

72. O.G. Bol'shakov, "Otchet o raskopkakh severo-vostochnoi chasti ob"ekta III," *MIA* 124 (1964), 116–119.

73. A.M. Belenitskii et al., "Raskopki v Pendzhikente," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1974 goda*, 534.

74. V.A. Livshits, "A Sogdian Alphabet from Panjikant," *W.B. Henning Memorial Volume* (London 1970), 257.

the eighth century, as it is difficult to believe that the wall was constructed only to be dismantled after its completion. The most probable date for the demolition of the wall is A.D. 712, when the Sogdians were evicted from the central part of Samarkand by the Arabs. The reason for the simultaneous construction of dozens of houses (many with murals and wooden sculpture) may be attributed to the rapid change in the situation in the country after Qutayba's campaign.

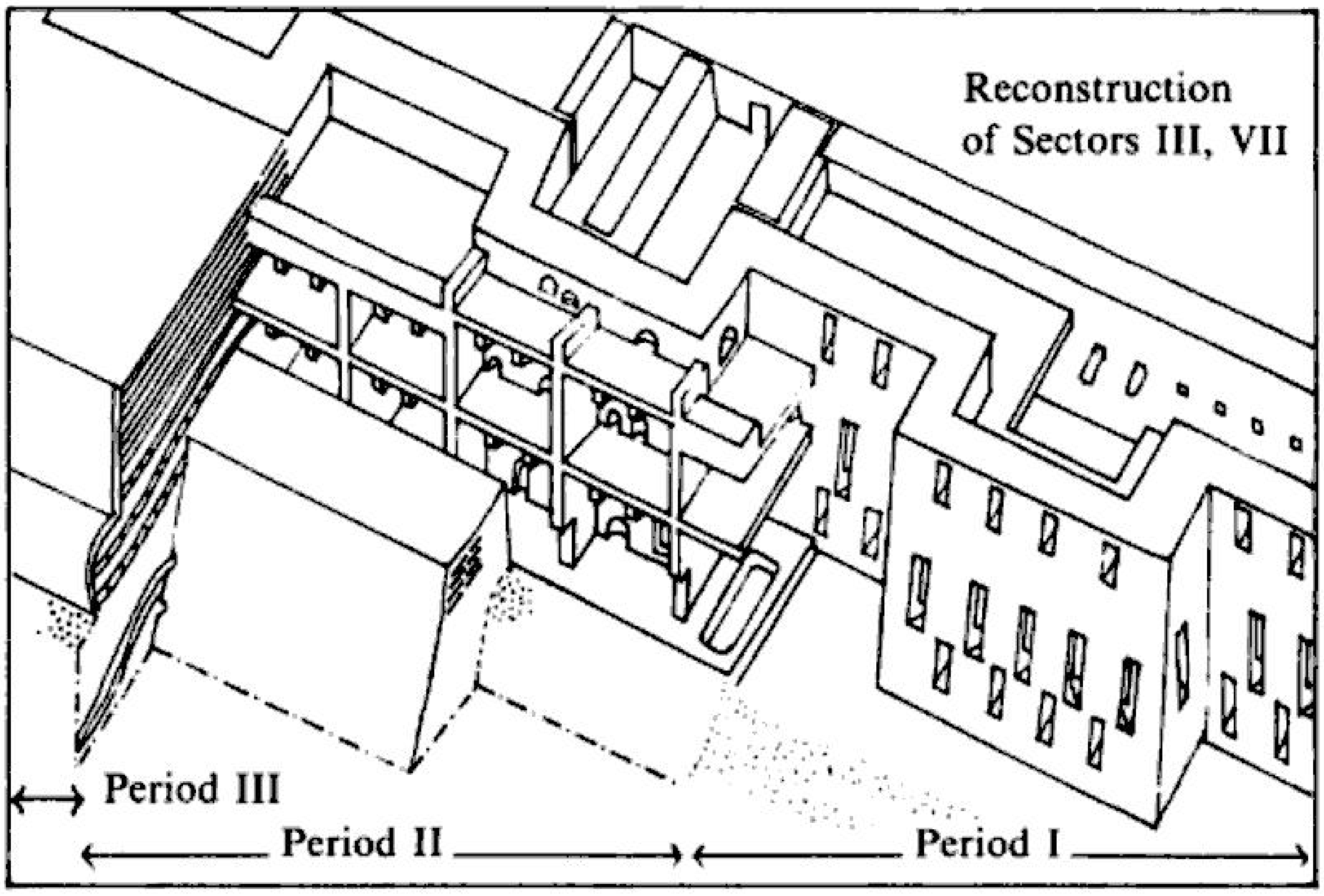

Figure 10. Reconstruction of the early city wall of Panjikent. Period I: fifth century. Period II: ca. 500. Period III: last quarter of seventh century.

Therefore, all the murals from *sector III*, which were dated in the initial excavation report to the seventh-beginning of the eighth century,[75] should now be dated no earlier than the first quarter of the eighth century. The construction of the palace on the citadel, for a number of reasons, should also be dated from the first quarter of the eighth century.[76]

Coins play a lesser role than pottery in the chronology of the more ancient

75. *Zhivopis'*, pls. XXIV–XXXIII.

76. A. Isakov, "Dvorets pravitelei drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Strany i narody Vostoka*; idem, "Raskopki dvortsa pravitelei drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane XI (1971 g.)* (Dushanbe 1975); Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi, otkrytye v Pendzhikente v 1971 godu," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 57, figs. 5, 6.

paintings, since only a few early coins were found, and their dates should themselves be more precisely defined. A hoard of twenty-six small silver coins depicting an archer is of great significance for the chronology of early Panjikent. The hoard was uncovered in one of the embrasures of the original city wall. The embrasures were demolished and concealed by a clay coating at the time of the first rebuilding of the city wall. The coins fell into the brickwork unnoticed, along with the earth taken from the layer of debris deposited when the first wall was in use. Objects, bones and pottery, which date from the earliest complex I in the city, appeared in the embrasures in the same way. Six basic consecutive ceramic complexes are attributable to the period prior to the mid seventh century. The pottery from the floors of the rooms constructed after the brickwork of the embrasures dates to the next ceramic group, complex II.[77]

According to the estimate of E. V. Zeimal', the coins date to the latest series of archer coins which had been issued for several centuries. These last series are separated by several typological stages from coins with legends written in a script similar to the writing of the "Ancient Sogdian Letters" (beginning of the fourth century). E.V. Zeimal' found it possible to assume on this basis that the latest issues date to the sixth and even the seventh century.[78] Therefore, the coins indicate that Panjikent was first settled sometime after the fourth century. Because of uncertainty about the date of the cessation of these coin issues, the upper limit of the possible date of the founding of the city should not depend entirely on numismatic evidence. Thus, the fact that the coins were found in a reliable archaeological context, along with the pottery of complex I, becomes particularly important.

How then, is the early Panjikent pottery to be dated? If similar pottery complexes are combined, they form three chronological groups: complexes I–II, complexes III–V and complex VI.[79] At least a century is usually assigned by archaeologists to each of the "pottery eras" similar to these groups. The following dates are thus proposed for the three complexes in question, complex VI: seventh century, complexes V–III: sixth century, and complexes II–I: fifth century. In itself, the pottery range offers a broad chronological framework that agrees with the dates of other Sogdian settlements, whereas the evidence gained from a study of the typology of the coins lends greater precision and definition to the chrono-

77. B.I. Marshak, "Gorodskaia stena V–VII vv. v Pendzhikente," *Noveishie otkrytiia sovetskikh arkheologov (tezisy dokladov konferentsii)* II (Kiev 1975), 115–117; idem, "Otchet o rabotakh na ob"ekte XII za 1955–1960 gg.," *MIA* 124 (1964); Raspopova, "Kvartal zhilishch," *SA* 1 (1969).

78. Zeimal', "Tali-Barzinskii klad," *SGÈ* XXXIV (1972), 74.

79. Marshak, "Otchet o rabotakh na ob"ekte XII," op. cit., 227–243; Raspopova, "Kvartal zhilishch," *SA* 1 (1969), fig. 181.

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logical framework. A more detailed examination of the difference between the ceramic complexes might be expected to yield greater chronological precision. For this purpose, later layers that contained firmly dated coins were studied. The degree of difference between the pottery of the layers of the middle of the seventh century and the first quarter of the eighth century was taken as the approximate range of changes over a period of sixty to seventy years. If the same criterion is used for dating the earlier complexes, then complex II would be dated to the turn of the fifth–sixth centuries, and complex I to the fifth century.

Despite the use of statistical methods, such computations are still inaccurate. However, the thickness of the layers that contain early pottery complexes, and the many reconstructions of the buildings (particularly up to the seventh century, there are five construction periods for the temples and three or four construction periods for various parts of the city walls) [80] argue against further contraction of the chronological range. Consequently, the latest possible date for the coin hoard on archaeological grounds is the second half of the fifth century. This is also the earliest possible date suggested by E. V. Zeimal' on numismatic grounds. The founding of the city took place somewhat earlier, since both the hoard of coins and the ceramic complex I date not to the time of the construction of the first city wall but only to the time of its use.

The earliest paintings of Panjikent, dated on grounds of stratigraphy, are the paintings on the eastern and western walls of the original north chapel in the courtyard of *Temple II* [81] (fig. 11). These murals were covered by the masonry of a later wall and a *ṣuffa* (a clay bench along the walls) with the pottery of complex II. The painting itself, consequently, dates to about the end of the fifth–beginning of the sixth century (but can hardly be any earlier, since the side chapel was constructed later than the main building of the temple, and it, as far as can be judged, is itself no older than the fifth century).

The main building of *Temple II* stood on a high platform. It was carefully maintained and kept clean. The layer of debris in it did not build up, and the walls had almost no reconstruction. Therefore, even though here the early murals were preserved almost unchanged up to the beginning of the eighth century, it is

80. A.M. Belenitskii, "Raskopki na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta (1970 g.)," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane X (1970 g.)* (Moskva 1973), 106–108; idem, "Raskopki gorodishcha drevnego Pendzhikenta v 1971 g.," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane XI*, 121–126; Marshak, "Otchet o rabotakh na ob"ekte XII," *MIA* 124 (1964), 184–216; idem, "Gorodskaia stena V–VII vv. v Pendzhikente," *Noveishie otkrytiia sovetskikh arkheologov* II (1975), 115–117.

81. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGE* XXXVII (1973), 58–61.

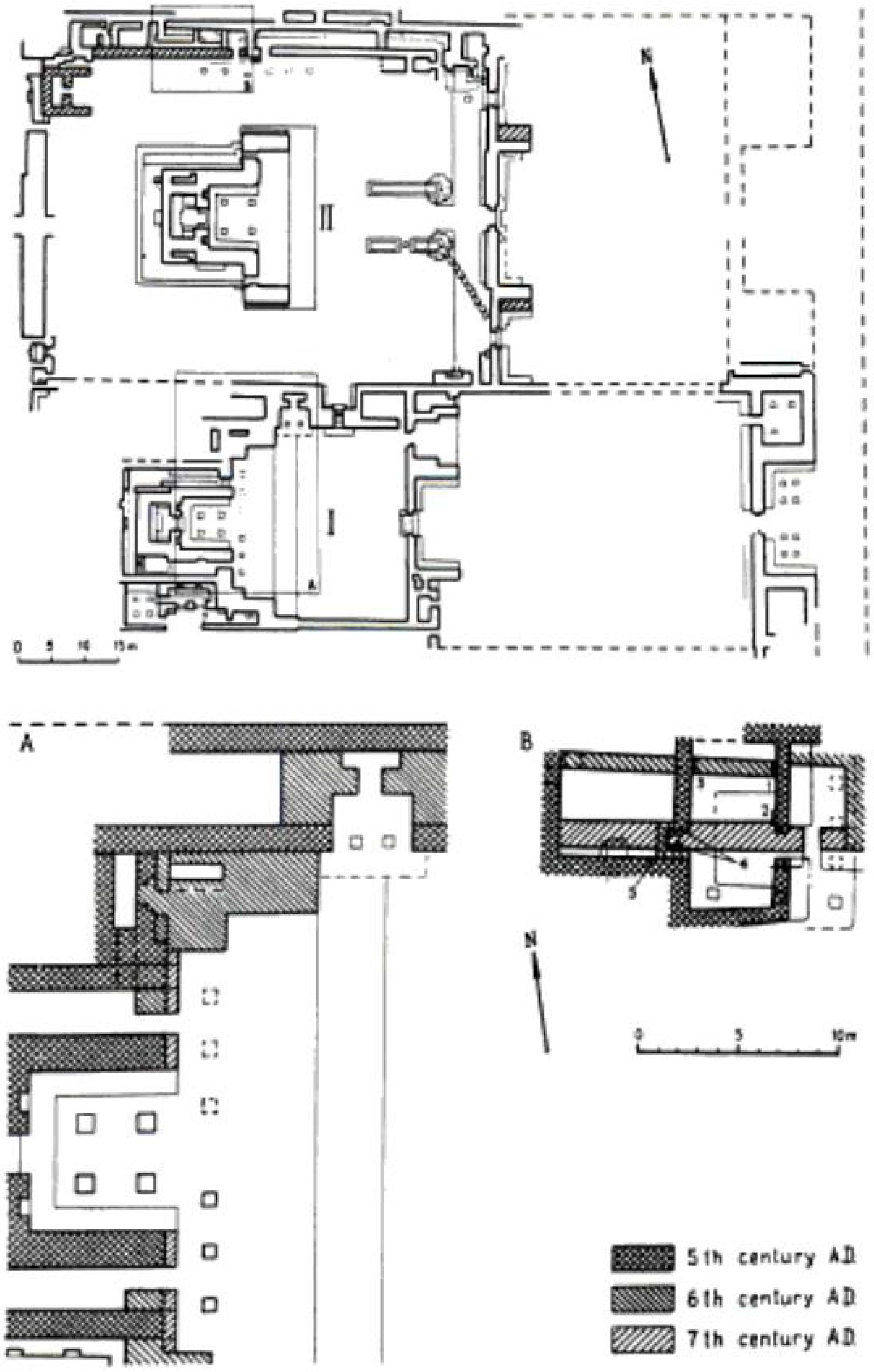

Figure 11. Schematic plans of temples from Panjikent. II: Temple II. *I:* Temple I. *A: Sanctuary of* Temple I. *B: The north chapel from the precincts of* Temple II. *Arrangement of the paintings in the north chapel: (1) goddess on the throne with* sēnmurvs, *(2) donors, (3) goddess on a lion throne (?), (4) donors, (5) goddess on a dragon.*

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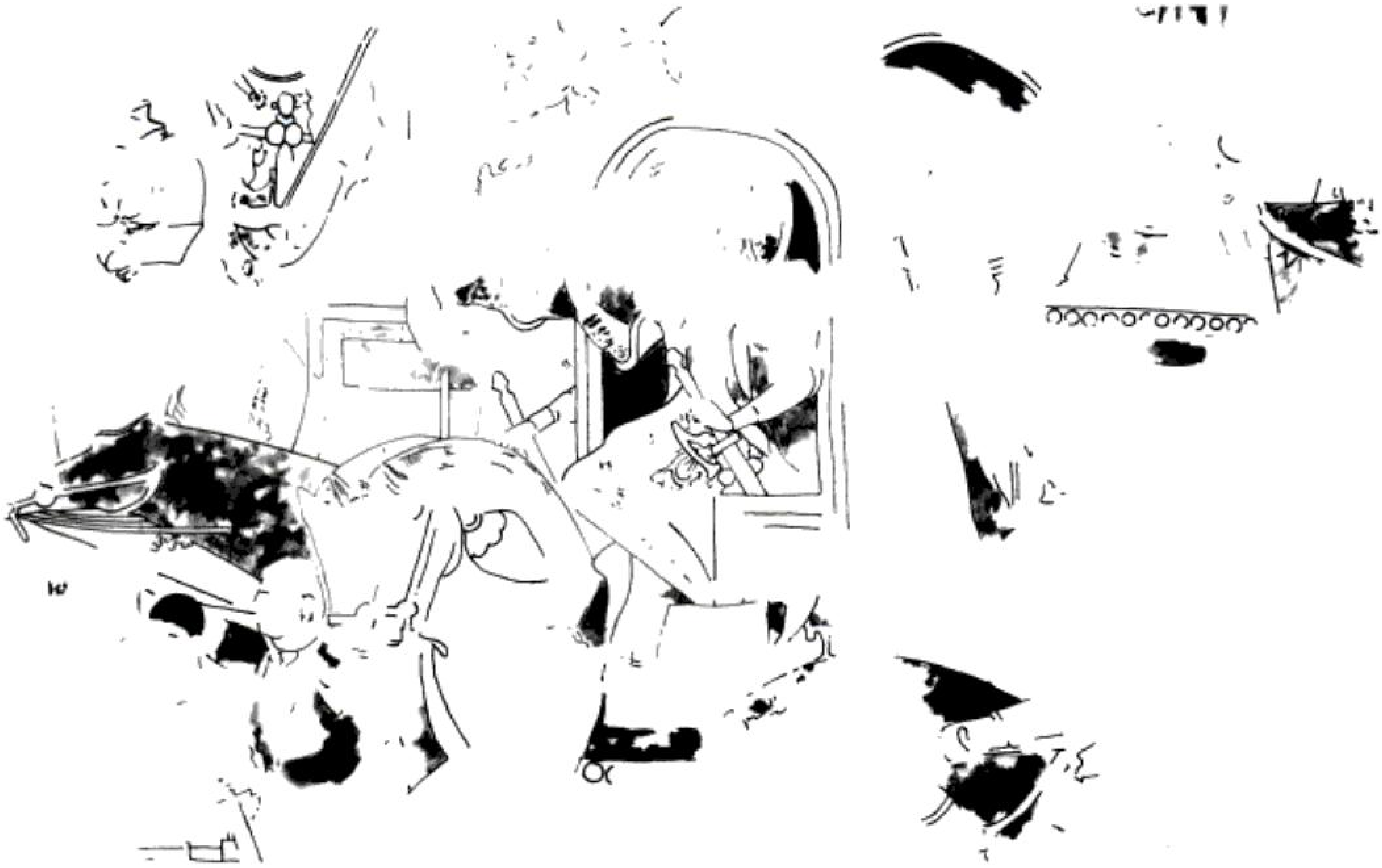

Figure 12. Mounted squadrons. Sketch of mural from the northern wall of the portico of the principal hall of Temple II, *at Panjikent. Fifth–sixth centuries.*

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impossible to give a stratigraphic date to them. The murals of the main building are dated to the fifth–sixth centuries on the basis of the similarity of the costumes of the persons depicted and those from the north chapel which dates from that time. A fifth century date is the more probable, since a Sogdian inscription over the painting on one of the walls reveals a somewhat more archaic script than the ordinary Sogdian script which prevailed after the fifth century (fig. 12). It must be noted that the painting in the temple has traces of renovation, but this renovation was carried out no later than the sixth century. It was earlier believed that the murals from *Temple II* depicted Turks[82] with whom the Sogdians became ac-

82. A.IU. IAkubovskii, "Drevnii Pendzhikent," *Po sledam drevnikh kul'tur* (Moskva 1951), 252, 255, 256.

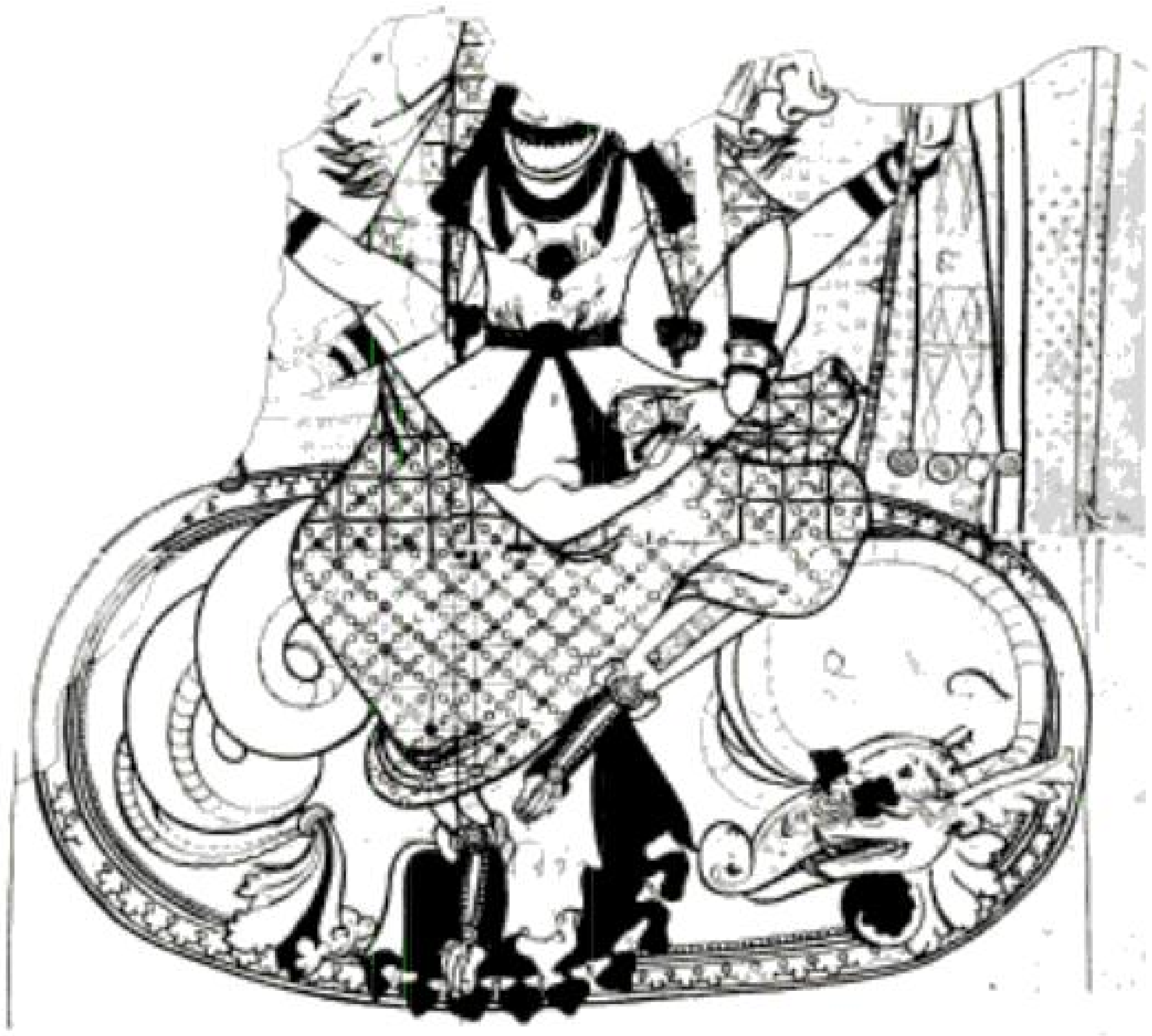

Figure 13. Four-armed goddess on a dragon. Sketch of mural from the northern chapel of Temple II, *at Panjikent. Sixth century.*

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quainted only in the sixth century. The subsequent discovery of representations of individuals who are clearly identified as Turks in Sogdian painting[83] has revealed a total lack of correspondence between the iconography used for the representation of Turks and that associated with the figures on the murals from *Temple II.*

To a somewhat later date belong the murals from the *northern chapel* of *Temple II.* These murals came from a rectangular niche built into a passageway in the western wall of the *northern chapel* during the reconstruction of the chapel in the fifth century[84] (fig. 13). To the same period belong murals from the main portico of *Temple I*[85] (fig. 14), from *Rooms 41–42* of *sector VI* (fig. 15) and from other rooms which were covered by the masonry of the walls in use in the seventh century. The stratigraphic date of these paintings is no later than the first half of the seventh century. The costumes, fabrics and ornaments depicted in them, however, are very similar to the realia of the earliest paintings. We note the belts with Sasanian-type buckles, a particular shape of sword-hilts, three-ply bracelets on an

83. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 29–34, pls. VII, IX, X, XI, XXXII.
84. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, pls. 1–2, 12–13.
85. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 55–57, figs. 3, 4.

Figure 14. Chariot of Veshparkar, harnessed with boars. Sketch of mural from the southern part of the western wall of the portico of the principal hall of Temple I *at Panjikent. Sixth century.*

arm, necklaces in the form of a twisted cord on the neck, Sasanian ribbons, a short caftan, wide trousers tucked into high, narrow boots, etc.

The designs on the fabrics do not yet include the Sasanian circles of pearls framing medallions which are widespread from the end of the sixth century. In addition, from the second half of the sixth century the costume of the peoples of Middle Asia changed greatly; the caftans became longer and narrow boots ceased to be worn. These particulars are found in the dress of the Sogdians depicted on a stone relief from a Chinese funerary monument of the third quarter of the sixth

century, executed in China after a Sogdian sketch.[86] They also appear in the paintings from Afrasiab, datable mainly to the seventh century. Therefore, an analysis of the realia makes it possible to give a precise stratigraphic date and relate the Panjikent paintings mentioned not to the sixth–seventh centuries but only to the sixth century.

Painting of the seventh century at Panjikent has been studied least of all. One may attribute to this period with greatest certainty the paintings with scenes of the hunt from the hall of one of the dwellings (fig. 4) (*Room 26* of *sector XXIII* fig. 16);

Figure 15. Sketch of mural from the northern wall of Panjikent VI : 41–42. *Sixth century.*

86. G. Scaglia, "Central Asians on a Northern Ch'i Gate Shrine," *Artibus Asiae* XXI/1 (1958), 9–28.

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Figure 16. Hunting scene. Sketch of mural from the southern part of the eastern wall of Panjikent XXIII:26. *Seventh century.*

the walls were covered with paintings, and later on, when the rooms were replanned, were heaped up with crude masonry. After the replanning, the fire of 722 occurred in which the entire building was burned down. We do not know how long before 722 the hall was renovated. It may be noted, however, that the painting was applied a considerable time prior to this repair, and was so deteriorated as to require renovation. Its lower frieze had been completely renewed, with the more recent painting lying on the semiobliterated older layer.

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The Chronology of the Paintings from Afrasiab, Varakhsha and Shahristan

The archaeological dates of the Panjikent paintings help to a certain extent to lend greater precision to the chronology of other Middle Asian paintings. Thus we may now discuss with a certain degree of detail Sogdian murals from Afrasiab and Varakhsha.

At Afrasiab (in the ruins of ancient Samarkand), paintings were found in several halls of houses constructed in the aristocratic block datable to the sixth–seventh centuries.[87] It is still unclear whether the ruler's palace was located in this block, since the planning and detailed stratigraphy of the entire section have not been completely studied. There is nothing specifically palatial here. Although in one of the halls the reception of the ambassadors by the Samarkand ruler was depicted, it would be an oversimplification to think that the depiction of the ruler could be found only in his own palace.

The painting of *Room 9*,[88] at Afrasiab, may be dated to the sixth century by analogy with the Panjikent paintings. The costume and sword of the male deity and ornament made of scalloped leaves are quite similar to those recorded in early paintings of the main buildings of *Temples I* and *II*[89] (figs. 12, 14), as well as of *Rooms 41–42* of *sector VI*, at Panjikent (fig. 15). Yet with respect to the subject matter, the Afrasiab painting is closer to the Panjikent paintings of the eighth century in *Rooms 2* and *13* of *sector XXIV*, where a pair of gods is also depicted (figs. 7, 8). The male deity carries a vessel containing the image of a standing camel which was well preserved at Panjikent in *Room 13*, *sector XXIV*, and, despite its fragmentary nature, is also definitely discernible in the Afrasiab painting (tongues of flame were formerly seen in the vessel shown here).

The painting of *Room 1*, at Afrasiab, is dated according to the inscription found on the mural to the reign of the Samarkand ruler Vargoman.[90] Vargoman began his rule before 655 (he obtained confirmation from the T'ang emperor no later than this year). For a time after 675 there was no ruler at Samarkand. Except for his immediate successor, the other rulers of Sogdiana at the end of the seventh and beginning of the eighth century were not of Vargoman's

87. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 11–14.
88. Ibid., pls. I, II.
89. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 55–56, figs. 3, 4; *Zhivopis'*, pl. XVII; *MIA* 15 (1950), pl. 57.
90. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 52–56.

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dynasty.[91] Therefore, it is unlikely that "memorial" paintings would have been created at a later date to commemorate this ruler. The widespread opinion that Vargoman ruled before 696 remains unconfirmed; similarly, the opinion that the Sogdian ruler who came to the throne in 698 was Vargoman's son owes its origin to an error in translation.[92] The paintings of *Room 1* are datable to the reign of Vargoman, in the third quarter of the seventh century. Paintings with hunting scenes, discovered in the last few years in two other halls at Afrasiab, date to the sixth-seventh centuries.[93]

The paintings of *Room 1* at Afrasiab differ considerably from the Panjikent painting of the first half of the eighth century and from the famous paintings of Varakhsha. Differences are evident in the manner of execution (a thick layer of paint, heavy contours), in the characteristic features of the composition, in facial type and proportions of the stocky figures, and finally in the depiction of the realia. Without discussing the weapons and costumes, we note that despite the careful depictions of the numerous and varied examples of patterned fabrics, and despite the representations in the paintings of members of a Chinese embassy,[94] there are no representations of multicolored T'ang silks with decoration in the form of elaborate rosettes. Silk patterns showing the Sasanian circles of pearls decidedly predominate. In the first half of the eighth century, however, T'ang silks with elaborate rosette patterns gained great popularity in Sogdiana.[95] Such silks are frequently depicted at Panjikent,[96] at Varakhsha (on the cloths of elephants)[97] and at Ajina-tepe.[98]

An even more popular type of fabric in Sogdiana of the eighth century was the monochromatic silk with a woven pattern in the form of large rosettes with double or triple borders. Such silks were depicted in the murals by a single color which was applied more thickly in the patterned areas than in the sections of the background. The designs of these silks resembled the designs of the famous

91. V. A. Livshits, "Praviteli Sogda i 'tsari khunnov' kitaiskikh dinastiinykh istorii," *Pis'mennye pamiatniki i problemy istorii kul'tury narodov Vostoka, IX godichnaia nauchnaia sessiia LOIV AN* (*Avtoannotatsii i kratkie soobshcheniia*) (Leningrad 1973), 25–26.

92. Smirnova, *Ocherki iz istorii Sogda*, 170–171.

93. SH. S. Tashkhodzhaev, "Raboty na Afrasiabe," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1972 goda*, 472.

94. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 60–73, pls. IX, XXXV, XXXVIII, XXXIX.

95. T. Akiyama, S. Matsubara, *Arts of China; Buddhist Cave Temples, New Researches* (Tokyo and Palo Alto 1969), 217–218, pls. 49, 52–55.

96. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, 32, pls. 26, 30.

97. Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, pls. III, VII, VIII.

98. Litvinskii, Zeimal', *Adzhina-tepe*, 59.

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polychromatic fabrics of Zandaniji, made in Sogdiana.[99] These fabrics were very often depicted at Panjikent during the eighth century,[100] at Varakhsha,[101] and at Kakrak (Afghanistan).[102] They are absent at Afrasiab.

This difference in the realia obviously stems not from the difference between the Samarkand school and the Panjikent school but from the chronological break. It must be noted that the Panjikent fragment of the seventh century painting (see above, p. 45) resembles the paintings of Afrasiab in the use of the heavy contour and the thick layer of paint. The style and realia of the paintings of Varakhsha compare not to the Afrasiab murals of the third quarter of the seventh century but to the Panjikent murals of the first half of the eighth century. This can be seen particularly clearly in the designs of the fabrics depicted. The Varakhsha murals, formerly dated to the seventh century, now appear to be later. The fifth–sixth centuries, suggested for Balalyk-tepe,[103] may also be too early. Since the archaeological find, there have been no definitive chronological values but the fabrics depicted there, as demonstrated by A.A. Ierusalimskaia, date the Balalyk-tepe murals to the end of the sixth–seventh centuries.[104]

Neither the stratigraphy nor the realia depicted offer a precise definition to the chronology of Shahristan. Investigators have noted that the paintings of the corridor are similar in style to the Panjikent painting of the first half of the eighth century, whereas the paintings of the Small Hall at Shahristan, which are quite unique in style, are believed to date from the second half of the eighth century or the first decades of the ninth century.[105] Islam was adopted, at least officially, by the dynasty of Ustrushana about 822.[106] After this period depictions of gods would no longer have been permissible in the reception hall of the palace. If one assumes with O.G. Bol'shakov[107] that Shahristan was not the capital of Ustrushana as N.N. Negmatov supposes,[108] it would then be possible to extend the date of the Small Hall for another two or three decades until the final Islamization of the country.

99. Ierusalimskaia, "K slozheniiu shkoly," *Sredniaia Aziia i Iran*, fig. 24.
100. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, pls. 19, 20, 21; *Zhivopis'*, pl. XXXIX.
101. Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, pl. XIV, figure on the right.
102. Auboyer, *Afghanistan und seine Kunst*, p. 77.
103. Al'baum, *Balalyk-tepe*, 125.
104. Ierusalimskaia, "K slozheniiu shkoly," *Sredniaia Aziia i Iran*, 34–38.
105. Negmatov, "Ėmblema Rima," *Izv. AN TadzhSSR* 1 (71) (1973), 21–23; Sokolovskii, "O zhivopisi Malogo zala," *SGĖ* XXXIX (1974), 51–52.
106. Negmatov, *Ustrushana v drevnosti*, 138–140.
107. See Bol'shakov, in Belenitskii, *Srednevekovyi gorod Srednei Azii*, 191.
108. N.N. Negmatov, S.G. Khmel'nitskii, *Srednevekovyi Shakhristan* (Dushanbe 1966), 191–195.

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With all its shortcomings, the chronological sequence of the Sogdian paintings is still more accurate than the chronological schemes proposed for the paintings of Tukhāristān and Eastern Turkestan. A few comparisons between the latter and Sogdian painting may be noted briefly. The paintings of Dilberjin-tepe in northern Afghanistan, published by I.T. Kruglikova, which come from the chapels near the city wall,[109] are similar in realia to the Panjikent paintings of the fifth-sixth centuries, and the paintings of Kakrak[110] are close to Panjikent murals of the beginning of the eighth century. The paintings of the Cave of the Painters and cave 15 at Qumtura in Eastern Turkestan resemble Panjikent murals of the fifth to the beginning of the sixth century. The chronology obtained from archaeological methods is independent of developments in theme and style, and permits the determination of thematic and stylistic changes on the evidence of dated monuments.

Arrangement of the Paintings on the Walls of the Buildings

In the Panjikent temples, the walls of the columned porticoes which framed the entrances to the courts of the temples, as well as those located in front of the main halls of the temples (fig. 11), were decorated with painting. The main halls of the temples were also decorated with painting, as were the portico and the inner sanctuary of side chapels. In wealthy homes and palaces the paintings were allocated to the main halls (fig. 17), to tunnel-vaulted corridors leading to the halls, to the arched *eivāns* and columned porticoes at the entrance to a building, and to the household sanctuaries with a hearth-altar in the form of a fireplace (figs. 18, 19). Sometimes the living rooms in both the first and the second story of a given house were decorated with painting (fig. 2). There were few rules regulating the distribution of certain specific subjects with respect to types of rooms and different sections of the walls. No attention at all was paid to the orientation of the paintings. Only the large temples had their open colonnades turned toward the east which was possibly connected with the worship of Mithra as the god of the dawn light.

The *eivāns* of residential buildings were decorated with motifs such as an amphora, containing branches with flowers and pomegranates (fig. 20), tridents, symbols of Veshparkar, and the moon in the form of the bust of a young girl framed from below by a crescent. One *eivān* contained the representation of a

109. Kruglikova, *Dil'berdzhin*, 54–76, pls. 6–18.
110. Hackin, Carl, *MDAFA* III, pls. LXII–LXIV; Auboyer, *Afghanistan und seine Kunst*, pl. 77.

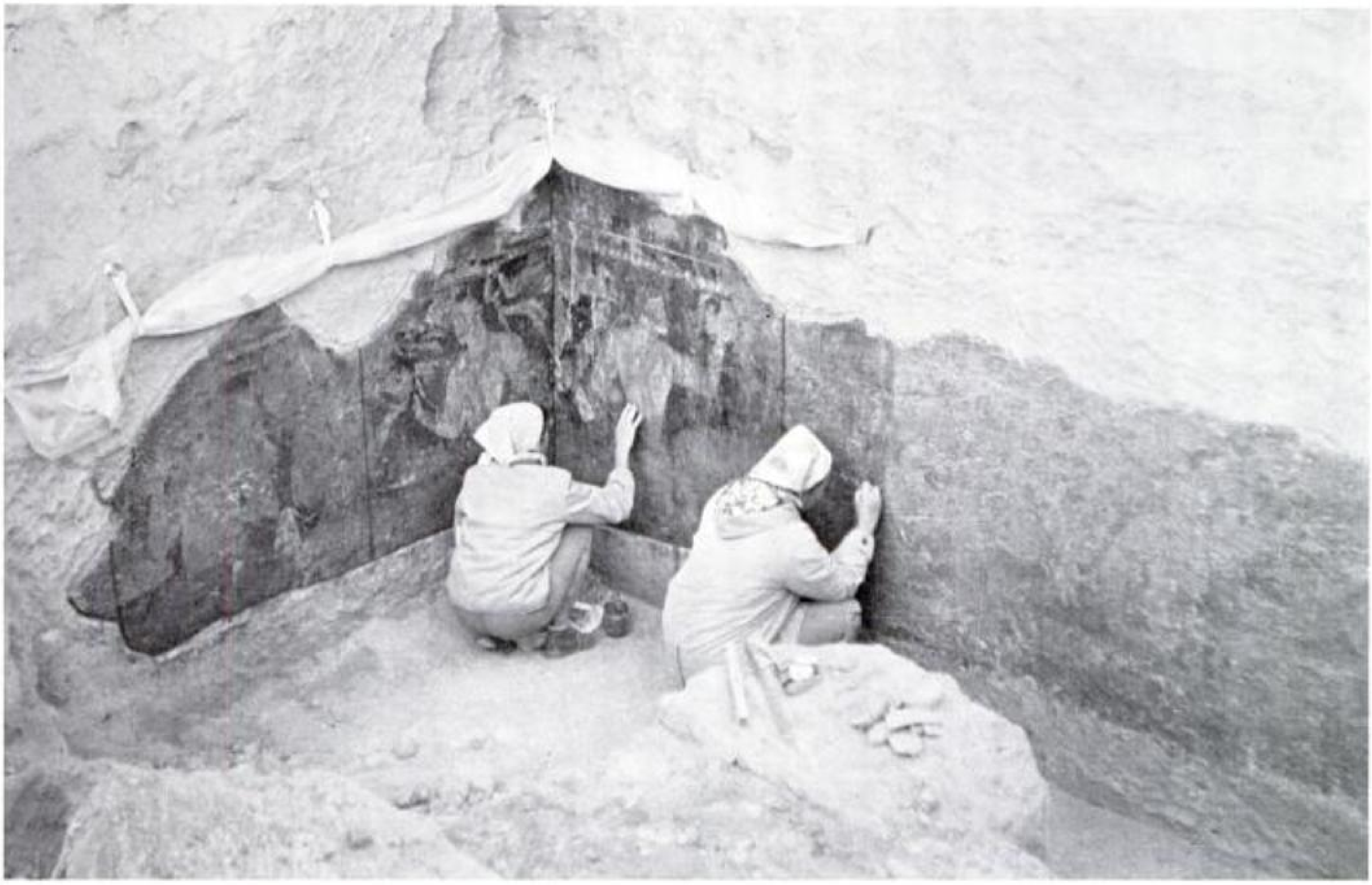

Figure 17. Preparation for the removal of murals from the principal hall of Panjikent XXIV.

standing man with a dish in his hands with his face turned toward the entrance (fig. 21). Pictures of human-headed birds with tails terminating in tendrils and plant ornaments (fig. 22) were placed along the cornice of this *eivān*. Such representations probably played a magical role; they were intended to summon blessings and ward off evil at the entrance of the house[111] (fig. 19).

A wall or one of the walls of each room in a given building was generally reserved for paintings depicting cult subjects. This wall, which was generally situated opposite the entrance or faced the hearth-altar, was marked by a

111. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 54–55; Belenitskii, "Raskopki na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1972 goda*, pl. 15 (Building 7).

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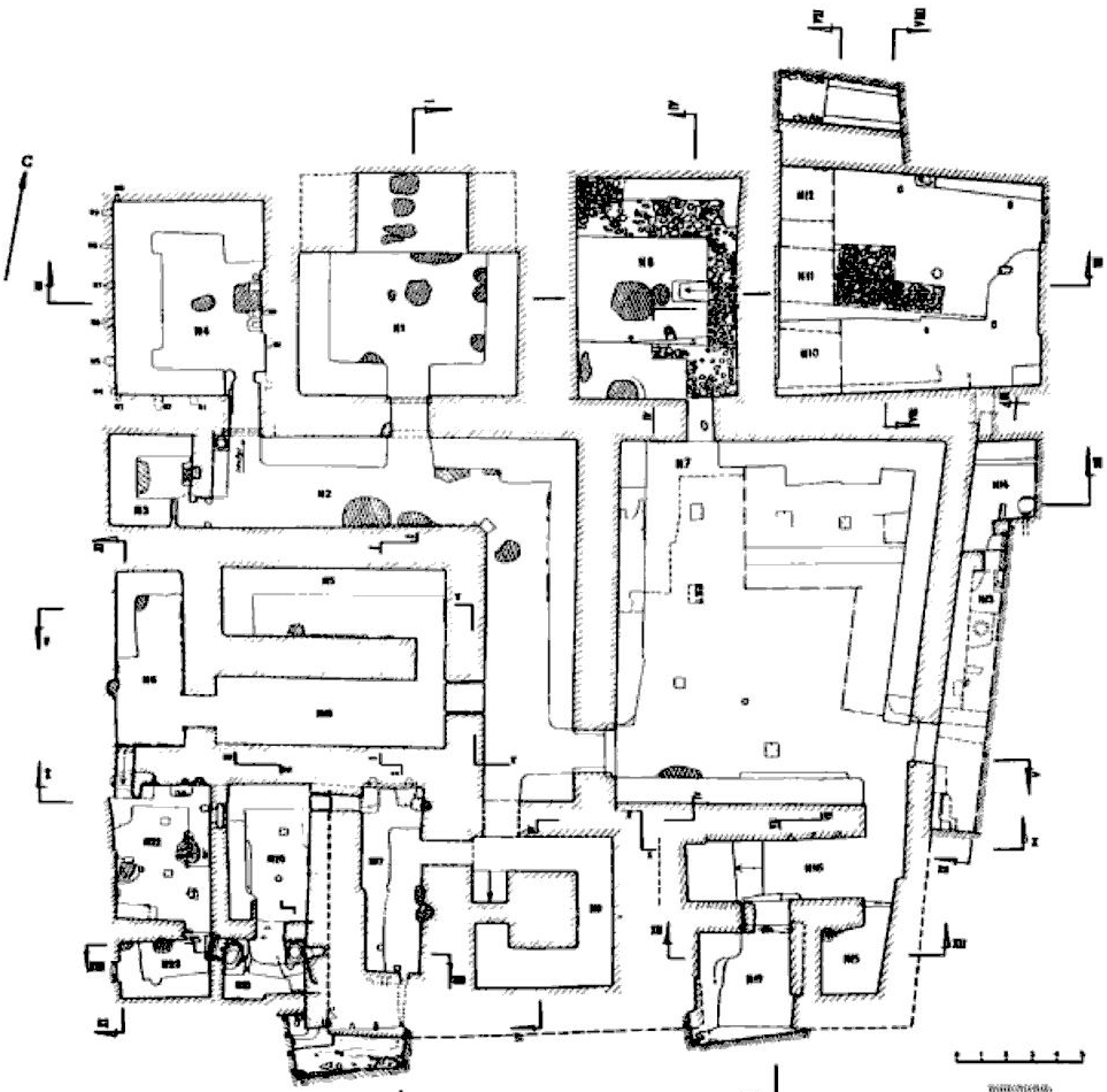

Figure 18. Plan of Panjikent XXI. Rooms 1–4 *were decorated with murals (1: principal hall, 2: corridor, 4: room with hearth-altar).* Rooms 7–8 : *halls without paintings.* Room 19 : eivān. Rooms 13, 22, 23 : *workshops.*

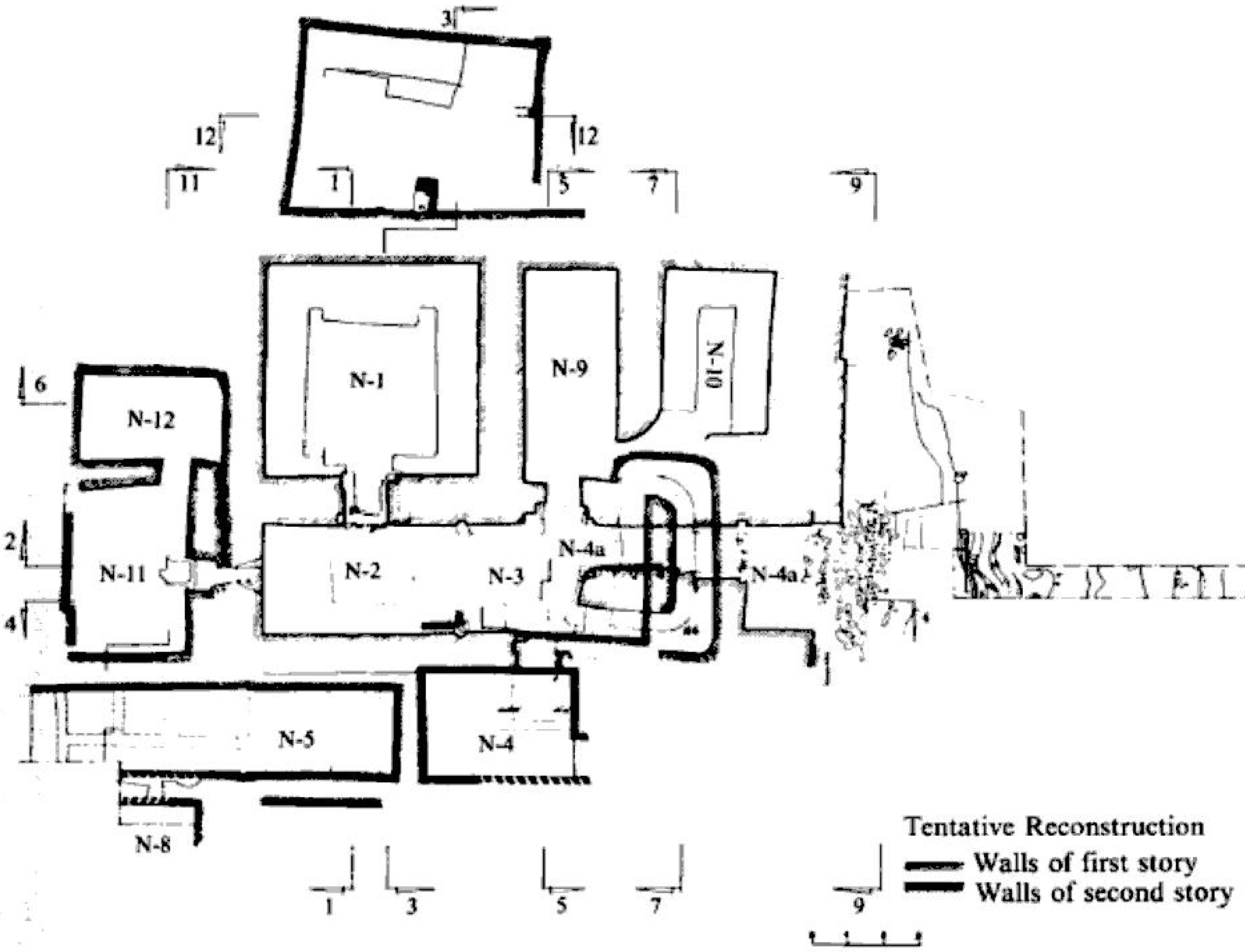

Figure 19. Plan of Panjikent XXIV, Rooms 1–4, 6, 9, 10 *are included in one dwelling (1 : hall, 2–3 : corridor, 4 :* eivān). *The murals were situated in Rooms 1–4, on the second story above the* eivān, *and above* Room 10.

Figure 20. Vase. Sketch of a detail of mural from the eivān, Panjikent XXIV. *Eighth century.*

Figure 21. Person with dish and vase. Sketch of mural from the eivān (Room 4) *of* Panjikent XXIV. *Eighth century.*

Figure 22. Human-headed birds. Sketch of mural from cornice of eivān (Room 4) *of* Panjikent XXIV. *Eighth century.*

projecting *ṣuffa* or by a niche. Occasionally cult themes were also found on the side walls. In the absence of a niche, the cult scene was placed within a painted arch supported by painted columns or by the figures of caryatids (cf. the famous Panjikent harpist [fig. 3] and atlantes [fig. 8]). Cult scenes always included depictions of gods and worshippers with portable sacrificial vessels performing rites. Paintings from the northern chapel of *Temple II*, dated to the end of the fifth century, show processions of individuals bearing sacrificial altars and gifts (a necklace, a dish) as they approach a goddess from both sides (figs. 23, 24).

Figure 23. Donors. Sketch of mural from the eastern wall of the northern chapel of Temple II, *at Panjikent. End of the fifth century.*

Figure 24. Fragment of the same painting as in fig. 23, in the process of restoration.

A representation of a fire altar was placed in front of the entrance to the sanctuary, which originally contained a divine image, in the northern chapel of *Temple I.* In the main hall of *Temple II* was portrayed a group of individuals bearing a sacrificial altar, who appeared to approach the entrance to the sanctuary. Another group was shown approaching the niche that contained the statue of a deity. In the Sogdian temple, as in the Zoroastrian Dar-i-Mihr there was no permanent fire; it was brought there in a special sacrificial altar-vessel.[112] The three statues, which once stood in the two niches of the main hall and in the sanctuary, indicated that three gods could have been worshipped in one temple.

Groups of standing individuals or banqueters, sometimes accompanied by rectangular frames with inscriptions (apparently with their names), were found in paintings of the sixth century on the *southern wall* of the *eivān* of *Temple I* (fig. 25). There are also banquet scenes in the northern *eivān* of the eastern enclosing wall of *Temple II* (sixth century), and in the portico of the northern chapel of *Temple I* (beginning of the eighth century). All these individuals who had attained the honor of being depicted in the temples had apparently made some sort of contribu-

112. G. Gropp, "Die Funktion des Feuertempels der Zoroastrier," *AMI*, N.F., 2 (1969), 148–149, 164, 172.

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Figure 25. Sketch of mural from the southern wall of the portico of the main building of Temple I, *at Panjikent. Sixth century.*

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tion to the construction and decoration of the temples. Their deeds were intended to secure the good will of the deity as well as the respect of their contemporaries. There were no strict rules for the arrangement of such groups of donors. For example, the northern wall of the *eivān* of *Temple I*, which was located opposite the above-mentioned southern wall with its three tiers of small figures of sitting and standing individuals, was devoted to mythological themes that were carried over to the western wall. Other subjects were also included in representations on the side walls of the *eivān* of *Temple II* (fifth–sixth centuries). These showed distinguished pilgrims approaching the temple, probably symbolic of the international prestige of the temple. The southern wall of the same temple depicted a procession with mounted rulers represented alongside a mountain range. The northern wall showed a procession with mounted squadrons (fig. 12).

In contrast to the religious-cult scenes, themes such as banquets, battles, processions, etc. had no fixed position in the plan of a room. In the later periods, the usual horizontal tiers of figures appeared sometimes without the ornamental strips that customarily separated the tiers. In such instances, the lower edge of the tier was indicated by the feet of the figure standing on a horizontal level. However, in compositions which were not separated into tiers, distance was indicated by forms placed at the top of the composition, exemplified by the early paintings of the fifth–seventh centuries. Whereas in the multitier painting the action took place in a continuous frieze along several walls interrupted only by the cult scene, compositions that occupied the entire height of a wall were confined to a single wall. For example, in the main building of *Temple II*, the side walls of the portico depict processions, the rear wall has two battle scenes, and along the side walls of the main hall are found scenes that were mutually related. These were, however, unrelated to the paintings on the rear walls of the portico and of the hall where they formed an angle with the side wall. The painting on the end wall of the hall, with its representations of donors, its niche statuary, and the passage to the sanctuary, interrupts the mythological subject matter which is depicted clockwise on the southern and northern walls of the hall.

In accordance with the spirit of Sogdian culture, adherence to strict uniformity is denied in narratives that extended now from left to right, and now from right to left. Even the goddess on the lion may be turned either to the right or to the left and may be shown holding the sun either in her right or in her left hand. Along with the distinction given to cult scenes by their assignment to the end walls and by allusion to magical formulae found at the entrances, the Sogdian painter

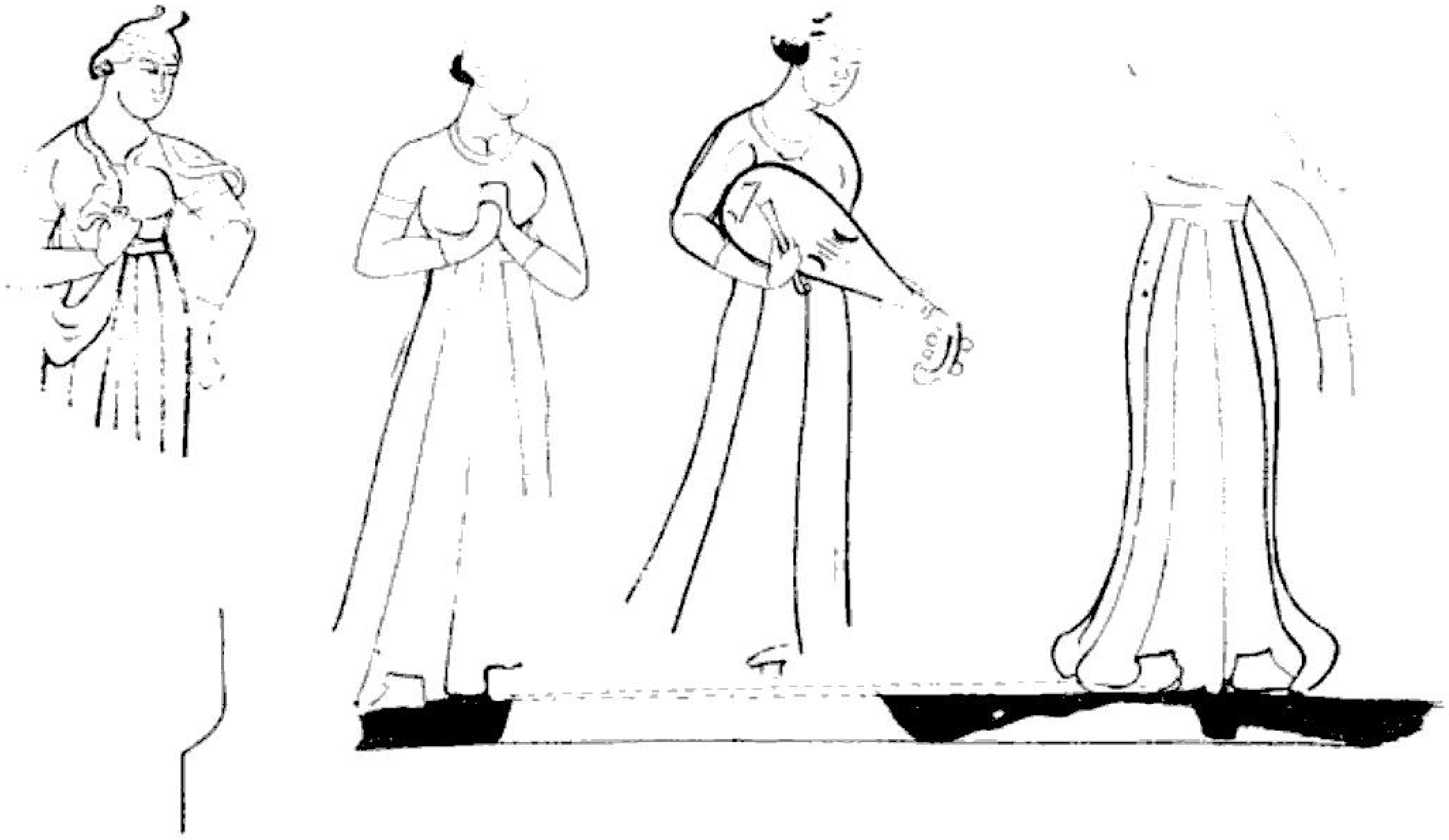

Figure 26. Musicians. Sketch of mural from the cornice of Panjikent VI:42. *Eighth century.*

also emphasized the principal theme of a painting by its allocation on the wall. The principal theme was usually placed within large friezes of about one meter (or more) in height. Secondary friezes (ca. thirty–forty centimeters high) were arranged below the principal frieze in halls with wooden ceilings and along the cornices of vaulted rooms. The paintings in the secondary friezes were as a rule purely ornamental, but in four halls (dated to the end of the seventh–first half of the eighth century) the lower ornamental register was replaced by small panel compositions that depict fairy tales, fables, and in one instance pairs of conversing couples (these may have served as illustrations of love poetry).[113] In one instance a whole orchestra of Chinese women was placed on a cornice (fig. 26).[114] The allocation of the paintings suggests therefore a clear division of themes belonging to major or minor kinds of literature.

113. Belenitski, Marshak, "L'art de Piandjikent," *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), fig. 21.
114. Ibid., fig. 22.

The Subject Matter of the Paintings from Afrasiab

The evidence from Panjikent permits a new interpretation of scenes that depict a royal reception in the murals from Varakhsha and Afrasiab. Although animal-shaped thrones are associated with royal figures of Middle Asia, it was not a ruler but a deity who was placed on a throne with legs shaped like winged camels[115] at Varakhsha. The divine identity of this figure is suggested by the location of the scene and the details of the ritual which correspond fully with those in religious representations from Panjikent. The god with the "camel-throne" is also known from Panjikent.[116] The ruler of Bukhara and his family are shown at the foot of the throne; the Panjikent citizens were shown in a similar position. Also similar are the ritual scenes of Dilberjin-tepe which depicted deities (including a goddess in a helmet) on the end walls of the sanctuaries.[117] As noted above, a pair of deities was also shown in a simulated arch painted on the end wall of *Room 9* (sixth century) at Afrasiab. In *Room 1* at Afrasiab, the paintings of the end walls were unrelated to the paintings of the side walls in content. The back wall shows an unusual composition, the lower part of which has survived, approached by a procession of figures. According to the theory of L.I. Al'baum, the procession moved toward the throne of the Sogdian ruler Vargoman.[118] The painting itself bears an inscription which states that the ruler Vargoman received the ambassadors from Chaghanian (a district in northeast Tukhāristān) and Shāsh (later Tashkent).[119] The composition of the painting includes depictions of the representatives of several nations, evidently intended as embassies from different countries. The same inscription, however, says that it was not the Chaghanian ambassador who approached Vargoman, but the ruler himself "approached him." This would be understandable if Vargoman were passing by the ambassadors and not sitting on the throne. Furthermore, in accordance with custom, the center of the main composition of the end wall should have contained the image of the deity and not of the ruler. If one accepts this hypothesis, it will be clear why the speech of the ambassador, given in the inscription, contains in addition to the formula for the greetings only this address to the ruler of Samarkand: "Be not suspicious of me, I am well informed on the gods of Samarkand, as well as on the writing of Samarkand, and

115. Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, 159–160.
116. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 61–62.
117. Kruglikova, *Dil'berdzhin*, figs. 37, 41a, 42, pls. 14, 16–18.
118. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 27.
119. Ibid, 55–56.

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I will cause no evil to come to the ruler . . . ."[120] V. A. Livshits, after reading the inscription, understands the words of the ambassador as a promise not to try to introduce the Chaghanian faith, and the writing connected with it, into Samarkand: "The Sogdians, who by the middle of the seventh century had survived many religious upheavals and had returned to Mazdaism, had reason to shun the new intensification of the Buddhist religion, which, judging from archaeological finds, prevailed at that time in Chaghanian territory."[121] At the beginning of the eighth century Manichaeism played an important role in the Chaghanian domains, but Tukhāristān on the whole was a Buddhist country in the seventh century.[122] Buddhism had spread in Ferghana and in Semirech'e. In Vargoman's time Buddhism was also championed by the emperors of China. The international situation obviously required that the Sogdian ruler take measures which would demonstrate to those connected with the Sogdian world that the national Sogdian religion at Samarkand, which had ousted Buddhism from Sogdiana, enjoyed general respect. Therefore, a grandiose reception was held before the statues of the gods, delegations brought gifts, and a banquet took place. Similar processions of the gift-bearers, rulers, and pilgrims, and banquets were depicted in the paintings of the Panjikent temples. Men from China and large groups of Turks figure in the procession of dignitaries depicted in the Afrasiab murals. They apparently were representatives of a number of states headed by Turkish dynasties. Ambassadors of other nations were also depicted there. The T'ang delegation, representing the Chinese emperor, the nominal suzerain of Vargoman, directly approached the gods with gifts. Turkish soldiers from the retinue of the Chinese ambassador were shown chatting on the side and awaiting the end of the ceremony. A group of representatives of Middle Asian territories awaits its turn. V. A. Livshits has kindly acquainted us with his most recent reading of the Sogdian inscriptions on these figures. The first in line wears a cap and rich Middle Asian costume decorated with a *sēnmurv* pattern. On his neck is a semieffaced inscription, the most probable reading of which is "Vargoman." An inscription on the second figure reads "Chaghanian dapirpat," and another on the clothing of a member of the Chinese delegation reads "a Tibetan person." The Sogdian visitor who left these inscriptions might have been mistaken about their identities. But it is doubtful that he

120. Ibid.

121. Note by V. A. Livshits to the book: Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 55–56, n. 155.

122. Belenitskii, "Voprosy ideologii i kul'tov Sogda," *Zhivopos'*, 44–45; Litvinskii, Zeimal', *Adzhina-tepe*, 120–121.

would have mistaken the image of an enthroned king in the center of the composition for that of a minor individual. It is quite probable that Vargoman stood with a necklace in his hand at the head of the procession, before the enthroned divine image (fig. 51) (cf. the first gift-bearer before the goddess from the *northern chapel* of *Temple II* at Panjikent). The absence of a crown should not confuse us since even the Sasanian kings were not always depicted with crowns.[123] The Bukhara ruler from the scene of sacrifice at Varakhsha was also without a crown. Each of the four walls of *Room 1* at *Afrasiab* was decorated with an independent subject. An inscription on one of the side walls indicates the depiction of a scene of presentation of gifts to the ruler Vargoman. This was probably a wedding cortege that proceeded from the end wall. This change in the direction of the movement emphasizes the absence of any cause and effect relationship between the compositions. The relatively large size of the ruler refers to the relationship between the ruler and his subjects and not to his relationship to the deity. The other walls depict scenes that pertain to life in different countries.[124] The scenes that deal with life in China indicate familiarity with Chinese works of art. As A.A. Ierusalimskaia established, Chinese painted scrolls were exported with silk from China to Sogdiana. Evidence of such exports is known from Mount Mugh and from Moshchevaia Gorge in the northern Caucasus.[125] Subjects such as the reception of the ambassadors and the bringing of a foreign bride could move the Sogdian artists to supplement the official part of the program of paintings of this type with an attractive informative reference to foreign countries. In view of the fondness displayed for literary themes by Sogdian artists, one may suppose that the painters of the Afrasiab murals relied upon a literary work on the wonders of distant lands similar to books on the marvels of India which had already appeared in ancient times.

The Range of Subjects of Panjikent Painting

The combination of ritual scenes, reflecting contemporary reality (fig. 27), and illustrations of literary works are characteristic themes of the paintings of Panjikent. Banquets, hunts on horseback, various holiday entertainments and processions

123. E. Herzfeld, "Khusrav Parwez und der Taq i Vastan," *AMI* IX:2 (1938), pl. IX.

124. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, 60–69, 79–86, pls. XXXIII–XXXIX, XIII–XVI.

125. Ierusalimskaia, "Velikii shelkovyi put'," *Sokrovishcha iskusstva drevnego Irana, Kavkaza i Srednei Azii* (1972), 14.

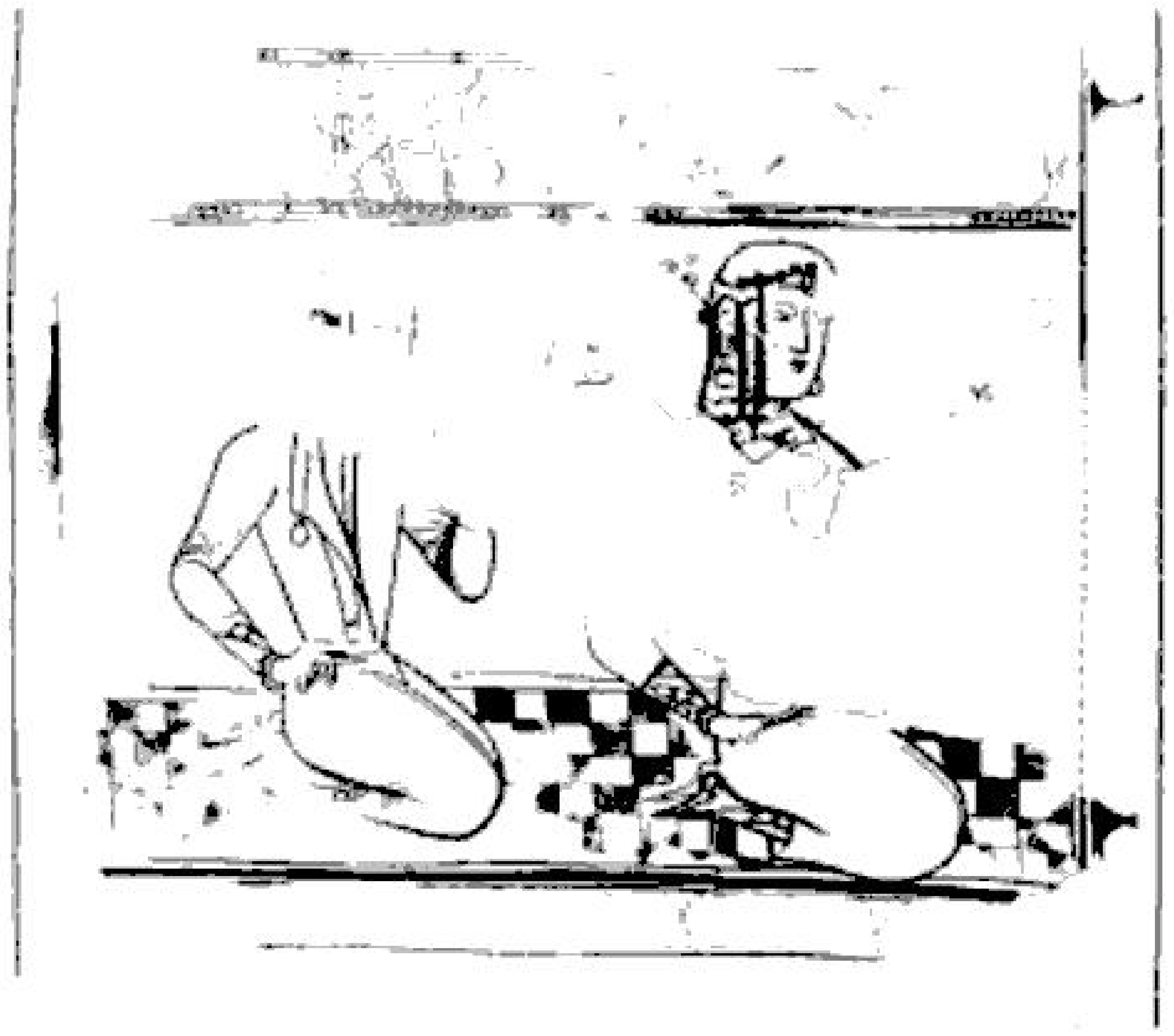

Figure 27. Kneeling figures on the side wall of a niche containing a representation of Veshparkar. Sketch of mural from Panjikent XXII : 1. *Eighth century.*

may refer either to specific episodes or they may be general comments on the ideal of the good life of a wealthy Sogdian citizen. Actual events were represented in the very fragmentary murals from the palace of Devashtich at Panjikent. The mural in the niche in the end wall was not preserved there. The eastern side wall of the principal room depicted a narrative that included episodes dealing with the siege and the storming of the city by *manjaniq* siege machines (figs. 28, 29) and ladders. Here were depicted scenes of an execution, ceremonial encounters of horsemen and the ruler (shown tying a diadem with wings and a half-moon around his tall cap) (fig. 30), and a conversation between a ruler with a cap with a diadem, and an Arab. The latter wears a turban, the ends of which are passed under his chin (turbans of Bedouins are also portrayed this way in the later miniatures) (fig. 31). One may recognize here events in the history of Sogdiana at the time of the reign of Devashtich such as the siege of Samarkand by the Arabs in 712 and the recognition by the Arabs of Devashtich's claims to the Samarkand throne around 720.[126] The ruler is here shown in the same scale as the other figures. Unlike the official

126. Belenitskii, "Raskopki gorodishcha drevnego Pendzhikenta v 1971 g.," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1972 goda*, 120–121; Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 57; Legal Documents and Letters in Livshits, *Sogdiiskie dokumenty*, 91, 110–112; Smirnova, *Ocherki iz istorii Sogda*, 227.

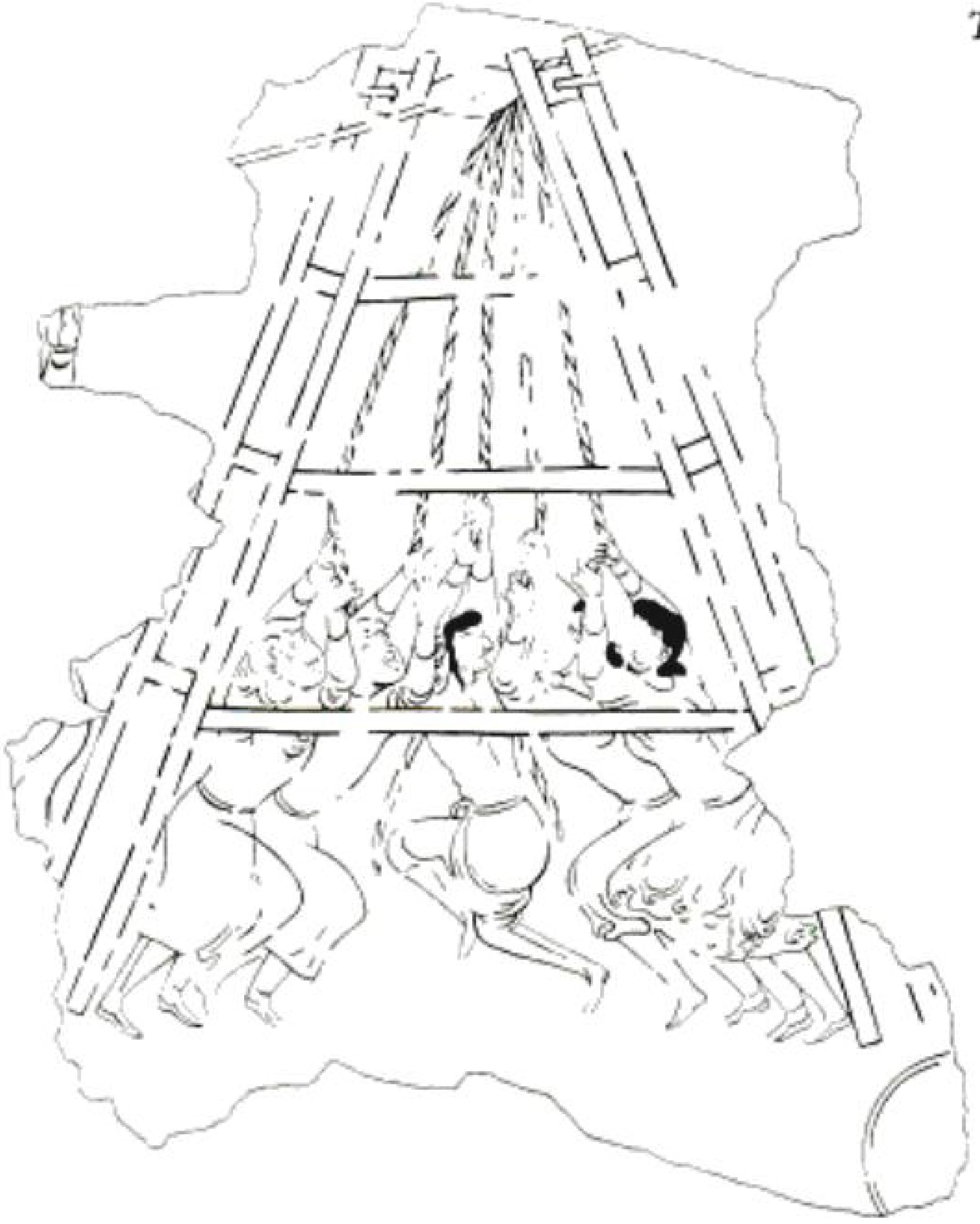

Figure 28. Manjanīq *siege machine. Sketch of a fragment of a mural from the palace at Panjikent. First quarter of the eighth century.*

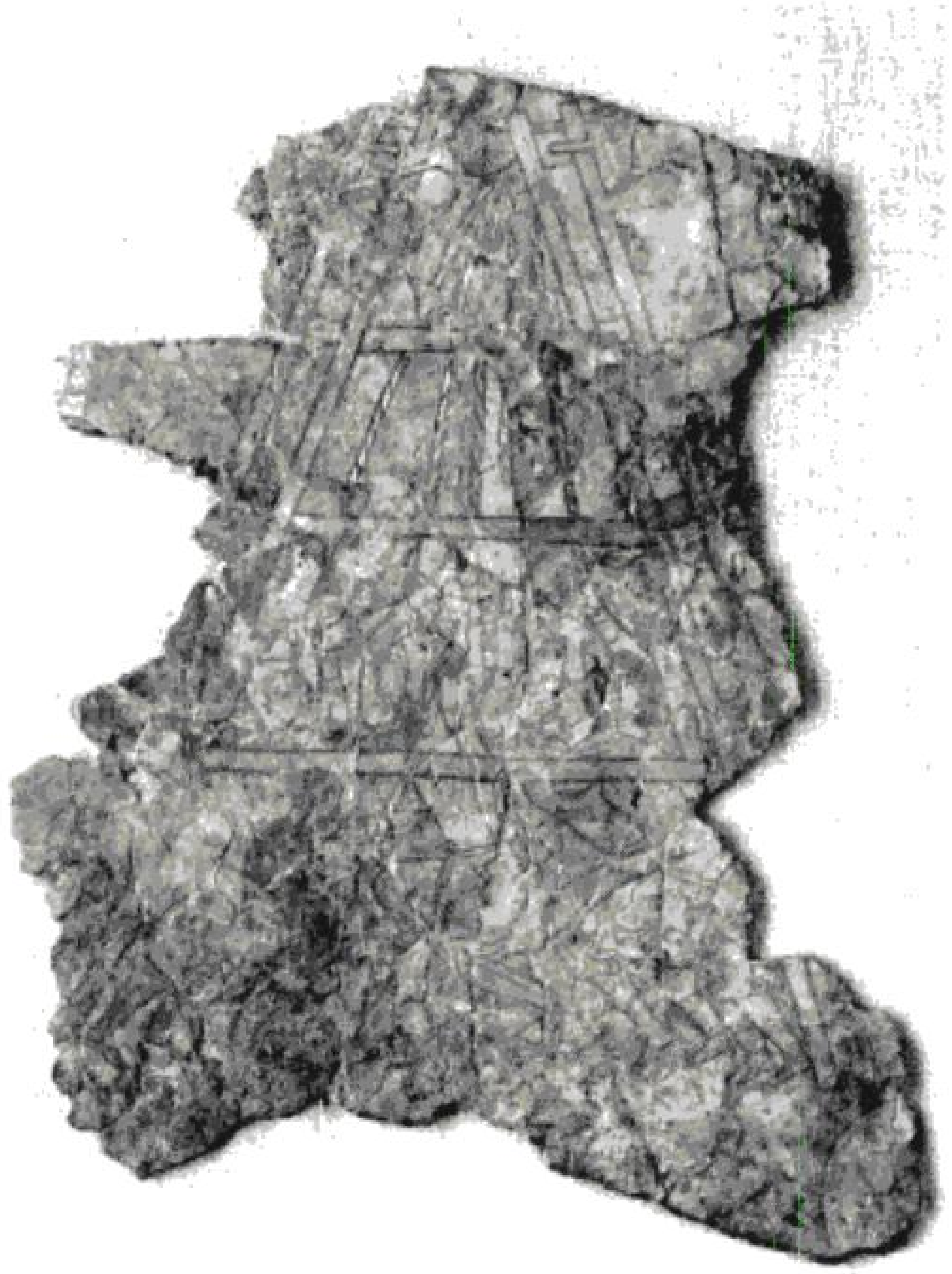

Figure 29. Photograph of the same fragment as in fig. 28.

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Figure 30. Diadem with wings and crescent being fastened around ruler's helmet. Fragment of a mural from the palace at Panjikent. First quarter of the eighth century (in the process of restoration).

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Figure 31. Fragments of murals from the palace at Panjikent. From left to right: an Arab, winged camel, head of a youth. First quarter of the eighth century.

royal art of the Sasanians, Sogdian art was not an expression of dynastic claims by specific rulers. Even in murals from royal residences, the Sogdian ruler assumed a modest role, not much more pretentious than that adopted by other Sogdian citizens in the ornamentation of private dwellings. The powerful Sasanian rulers, on the other hand, depicted themselves as gods in their reliefs showing investiture, or as epic heroes in scenes of single combat. The ruler was the model of valor and greatness for his subjects and heirs. But the Sogdians, who also tried to show models of valor in their art, relied on models provided by literary heroes rather than by their contemporaries.

The diversity of epic subjects in the painting of Panjikent has prompted the assumption that these murals depicted the deeds of the ancestors of the owner of a given house.[127] However, the existence of paintings that treat subjects from translated literary works would argue against this assumption. We recognize only epic subjects preserved in foreign literary sources. The remainder of the Sogdian epics[128] can be "read" solely from the graphic representations for which only approximate interpretations may be offered by submersion in the study of comparative folklore. It is not the spirit of feudal pride that dominates Sogdian painting but the pathos of heroism. Tales of chivalry in the West, and *Shāhnāma* in the East, were the favorite reading matter not only in feudal castles but also in the homes of the citizens.

Epics, episodes of which are depicted in murals from the walls of the temples, and *Room 6* of *sector III*, at Panjikent,[129] and in the *Small Hall* at the Shahristan *palace*, do not easily lend themselves to interpretation. We recognize the grandiose battle of gods (Veshparkar, Nanā and the Sun) and mortals against *dēws*[130] (fig. 32), and the story of Ḍaḥḥāk in its later variant. According to this version of the epic, Ḍaḥḥāk is no longer a dragon but a ruler with serpents that grow from his shoulders[131] (fig. 33). However, the famous mourning scene remains as unclear as the

127. Staviskii, *Iskusstvo Srednei Azii. Drevnii period, VI v. do n. ė.–VIII v. n. ė.*, 206, 214.

128. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, 17–27, 30–34, 47–49.

129. Ibid., 14–15; Belenitskii et al., "Raskopki v Pendzhikente," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1974 goda*, 535.

130. Negmatov, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov Ustrushany," *SA* 3 (1973), 185–201, figs. 1–14; Sokolovskii, "O zhivopisi Malogo zala," *SGĖ* XXXIX (1974), 49–51; Voronina, Negmatov, "Otkrytie Ustrushany," *Nauka i chelovechestvo; mezhdunarodnyi ezhegodnik 1975*, 63–67.

131. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGĖ* XXXVII (1973), 56–57, fig. 4; N.N. Negmatov is apparently incorrect when he defines the motif of the wooden tympanum from Shahristan as the victory over Ḍaḥḥāk. Voronina, Negmatov, op. cit., 60–67.

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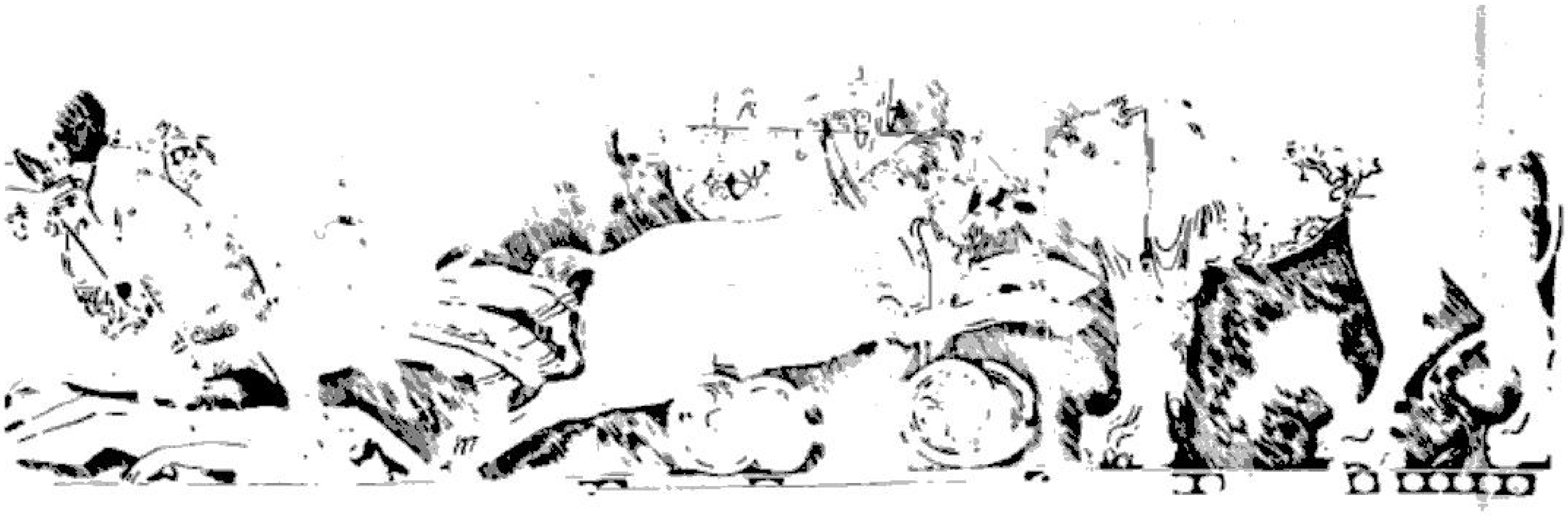

Figure 32. Sketch of fragments of a mural depicting a battle of gods and men against dēws: *Nanā is on the lion facing the chariot of the sun as it rushes toward her. Eastern wall of* Panjikent III:6. *Eighth century.*

scenes related to it. These depict a rearing red horse, the destruction of a city, a procession of men leading a saddled red horse and kneeling individuals with swords at their belts. Most readily identifiable are the pictorial references to fables and parables, noteworthy among which are episodes from the *Pañcatantra* and the fables of Aesop.[132] The fact that Sogdian painting was closely related to literary and textual sources is indicated by the correspondence between the subject matter of Sogdian painting and themes later favored by miniaturists [i.e., the *Pañcatantra* (later *Kalīla wa-Dimna*), Aesop's fables and the tales of Ḍaḥḥāk and Rustam (later *Shāhnāma*)] (see *Part Two*, chapter 2), and by the introduction of explanatory texts into the composition of the Sogdian murals.[133]

Of the entire range of subjects, the depictions of the deities proved to be the most difficult to understand. The Chaghanian ambassador was very familiar with the Sogdian gods. We, unfortunately, know very little about them. In addition to the gods who were discussed in the section on cultural relations, it has been possible

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132. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, 49.

133. Ibid., 34, 48, 49; Belenitski, Marshak, "L'art de Piandjikent," *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), fig. 20.

Figure 33. Ḍaḥḥāk. Sketch of mural from the northwestern corner of the portico of the principal hall of Temple I, *at Panjikent. Sixth century.*

to identify certain celestial deities and apparently, the goddess of the river, Zeravshan[134] (fig. 34). However, the identification of the deities on the basis of their iconography requires further study. The deities depicted on a large scale in the composition on the end wall of the principal rooms may be identified as images of the one or two patron gods favored by the families that occupied the houses. These deities were Veshparkar and Nanaia, Nanaia alone, the god on the camel throne (Verethragna-*wšγn*?), the same god with his wife (figs. 7, 8), a long-bearded god on a throne with horses (not winged!) (fig. 35) and others.[135] These gods were included in a single pantheon since, in addition to the patron deity of the masters of the house, other gods and goddesses were also depicted in various contexts in the halls of some private residences.

Sogdian divine concepts differed substantially from those known from the Avesta. The development of mythological narratives, reverence for the consorts of the deities (at least two pairs of gods are known), and emphasis on divine harmony (suggested by musical instruments often found in religious iconography) are traits peculiar to the Sogdian religion.[136] Animal-attributes of gods who appeared in Sogdian art only in human form replaced the animal incarnations of gods.[137] Allusions to the animal attributes of the gods appear in the gods' animal mounts, their zoomorphic thrones and especially the flying, winged creatures with the protomes of animals (fig. 31) (possibly reflections of the concept of the *farn*, the good fortune, or greatness, of a specific deity). These ideas were reflected in

134. Ibid., 42–45.

135. Ibid., 9–10; D'iakonova, Smirnova, "K voprosu o kul'te Nany," *SA* 1 (1967), 80–81, fig. 5; *Zhivopis'*, pls. XXVI–XXVIII; Belenitskii et al., *Skul'ptura*, pls. XX–XXII, XIX; A. M. Belenitskii, "Zoomorfnye trony v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve Srednei Azii," *Izv. AN TadzhSSR*, vyp. 1 (28) (1962), fig. 1; idem, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, 25; idem, "Raskopki na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia 1972 goda*, 487–488; Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 61–62; Sokolovskii, "O zhivopisi Malogo zala," *SGÉ* XXXIX (1974), 49; Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, pl. II; Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, pls. XIV, XV. The 1978 excavation season at Panjikent uncovered a mural that depicts a conflict between a god in a chariot drawn by a pair of boars and a horseman wearing a helmet decorated with the ears of an animal. The god in the boar-drawn chariot, also known from the west wall of *Temple I* at Panjikent (fig. 14), may be identified as a representation of Veshparkar.

136. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, 30, pl. 4; Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 58–59; Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, pl. XV; Sokolovskii, "O zhivopisi Malogo zala," *SGÉ* XXXIX (1974), 49; Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, fig. 102.

137. Belinitski, Marshak, "L'art de Piandjikent," *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 13–16.

Figure 34. Goddess on throne supported by sēnmurvs. *Sketch of mural from the eastern wall of the northern chapel of* Temple II, *at Panjikent. End of the fifth century.*

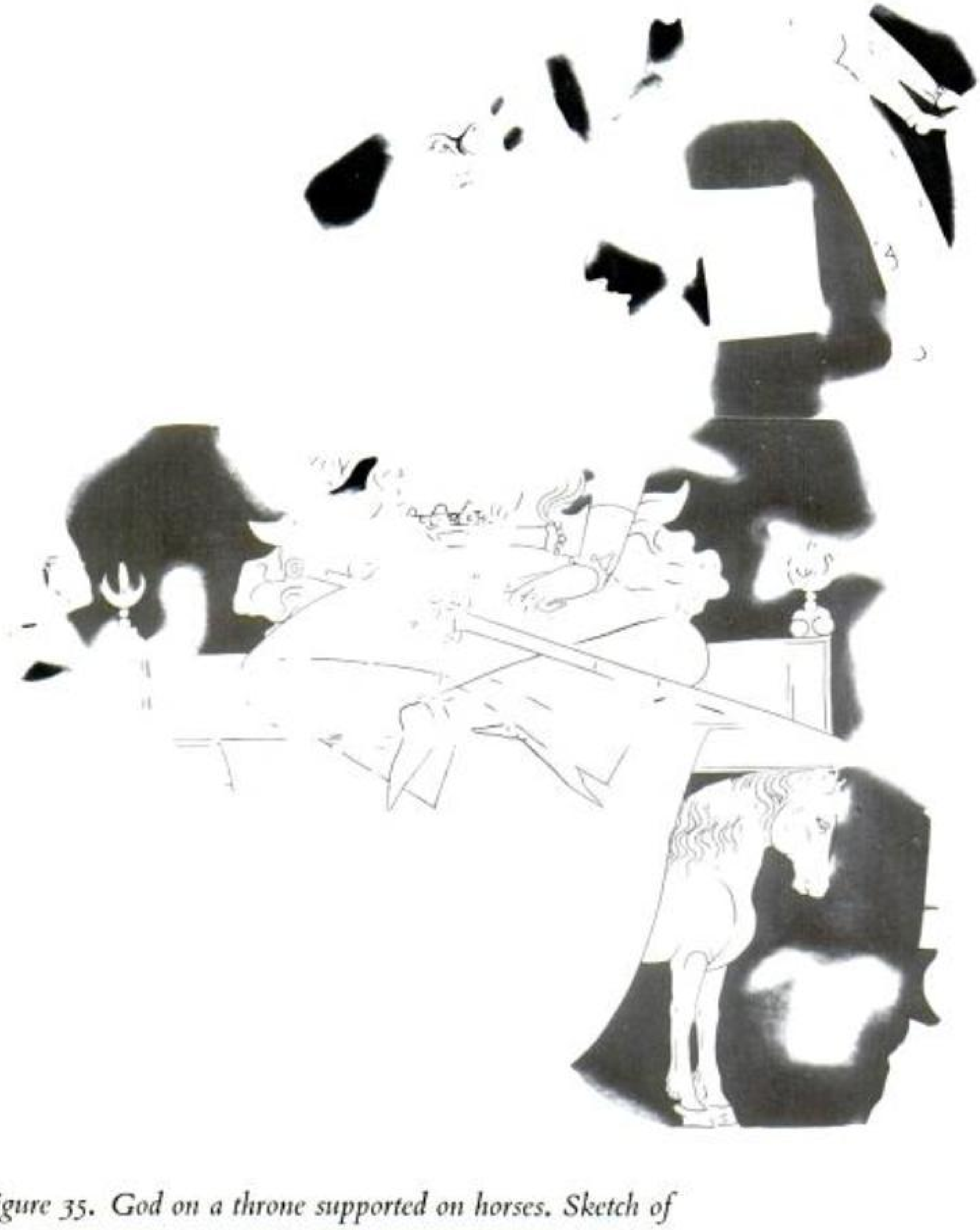

Figure 35. God on a throne supported on horses. Sketch of mural from the north wall of Panjikent XXVI:1. *Eighth century.*

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Sogdian names like Nanaifarnč (possessing the *farn* of Nanā).[138] In one of the earliest paintings (*eastern wall* of the *northern chapel* of *Temple II*, end of the fifth century), the throne of the goddess is supported by the figures of *sēnmurvs*, creatures with the head and paws of a doglike beast and the wings of a bird[139] (fig. 34). These creatures al-Biruni calls winged foxes, Xurasān-xurra,[140] خراسان خره i.e., eastern (heavenly) *farn*, and notes that in them lay the good fortune of the dynasty of the Kayanians. Thus he identifies them with the famous "*farn* of the kavis." The "*farn* of the kavis" was a symbol for the Sogdians,[141] but it is still unclear as to whether it possessed there an iconography that corresponded to the information offered by al-Biruni. If it possessed this iconography, then the goddess with whom it is associated remains to be identified.

Characteristics of the Style

Since it is not possible to discuss the development of style in detail here, we will mention only a few essential points. We note first of all that although prototypes for many technical devices, iconographic motifs, color schemes, methods of conveying space, hand gestures, etc., are readily found in Kushan, Gupta and Sasanian art, in Sogdian art these borrowings were fused into a unique unified entity with an independent value.[142] Sogdian art achieves its greatest originality in paintings of epic subjects. In paintings that date mainly to the first half of the eighth century, all the representational devices were subordinated to the aim of communicating the content of the illustrated work. The artist strove to involve the viewer in the mounting tension of heroic exploits. The viewer was to feel the reality of the event and recognize the vicissitudes of battle in the expression of the power and vulnerability of the combatants. Realism used to convey the equipment

138. *Sogdiiskie dokumenty* II, 53. On the *farn* see B.A. Litvinskii, *Kangiuisko-sarmatskii farn* (Dushanbe 1968) (with a complete bibliography).

139. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGE* XXXVII (1973), 58–59.

140. See the Istanbul manuscript, folio 123b, al-Bīrūnī, *The Chronologies of Ancient Nations*, in A.B. Khalidov, "Dopolneniia k tekstu 'Khronologii' al-Biruni po leningradskoi i stambul'skoi rukopisiam," *Palestinskii sbornik*, vyp. 4 (67) (Moskva/Leningrad 1959), 158 (text), 166 (translation). See also Abū Raiḥān al-Bīrūnī (973–1048), selected works translated by M. A. Sal'e, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* I (Tashkent 1957), 237. al-Mas'ūdi (II, 282) makes mention of Xurāsān-xurra خراسان خره on the seal of Khusro II, see E. Herzfeld, *AMI* IX:2 (1938), 157.

141. Livshits, *Sogdiiskie dokumenty* II, 187.

142. B. Rowland gave Sogdian painting a high evaluation. Rowland, *Central Asian Art*, 54–75, 216.

and realia (fig. 36) endows authenticity and epic detail and enhances the sharp clarity of details in the representation of the wounds and torments of those who perished. The contrast in levels of tension creates a complex rhythm in the narrative which first accelerates and then slows down in the continuous frieze that stretched along the walls. Partly because of its unfamiliar nature and novelty and partly because of the fragmentary nature of the paintings, Sogdian murals had appeared to early investigators as mannered and aristocratically refined, with a restrained canon. The subsequent discovery of great epic cycles, however, has proven these traits to be the manifestations of a unified, rhythmical organization that best corresponded to the heroic spirit of Sogdian art.

The combination of repetition in individual features with compelling originality of the whole characterizes the murals from Panjikent. Even compositions that were executed at the same time in two adjacent houses and depicted the same gods differed substantially from each other. There are no traces of the use of any mechanical methods of transferring a preliminary sketch to the wall (see *Part Two*,

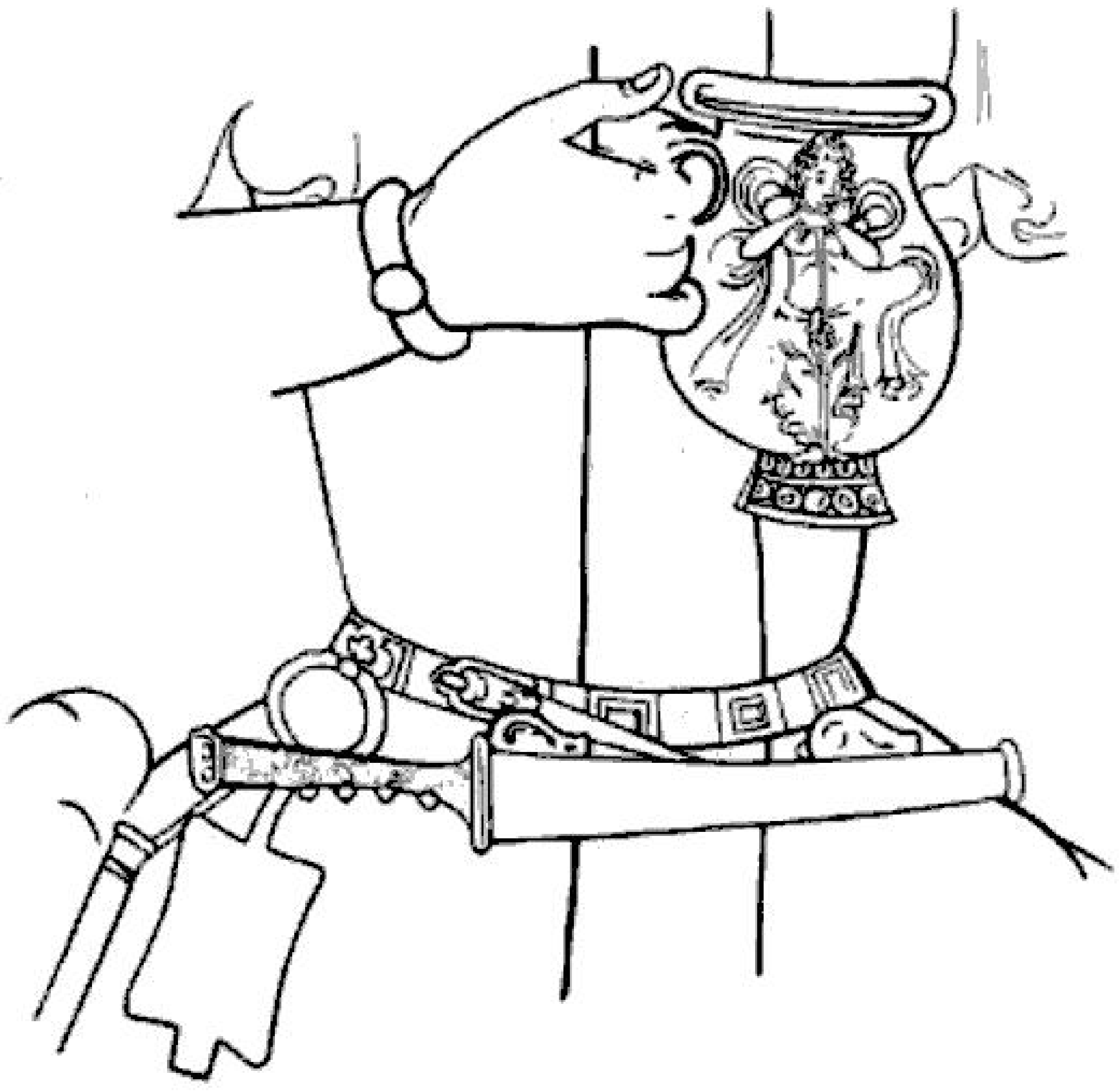

Figure 36. Sketch of a detail of a mural from Panjikent XVI:10. *Eighth century.*

Figure 37. Lower ornamental border. A reconstruction of a mural from the west wall of the portico of Panjikent X. *Seventh–eighth centuries.*

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chapter 5). Like an epic poet improviser who has a command of the subject and readily remembers epic formulas he has memorized, the artist easily found in his professional memory conventional graphic elements, the knowledge of which helped him to develop his subject rapidly and surely. Sogdian art never lost its keen interest in the specific moment, particularly the moment of danger which could become fatal.

Although volume was sometimes conveyed only by means of the sketch, both lightly modeled figures and those completely devoid of modeling never became flat silhouettes. The increase and relaxation of tension was expressed in each palmette of an ornament (fig. 37), in each fluttering ribbon and in each human figure. The viewer's eye does not grasp the composition as a whole but traces the development of the forms that are often distinguished by colors that contrast with the bright blue, red or deep black of the background. The development of the human form is strictly logical; from a narrow waist rises a broadening body with powerful rounded shoulders. The arms, muscular and broad at the shoulders, taper down to light, mobile hands with finely drawn fingers. A broad, strong neck supports a light head with tapered skull.

Expression was achieved not by the style of execution but by the expressiveness of the forms themselves with their powerful curvings and flamelike terminations. Nothing distracted from the development of action, and the subject matter was directly connected with the events portrayed. Sometimes the lower edge of the register, the ground line on which the figures stand, was not even indicated. The vigorous figures made the ground line dispensable.

This was Sogdian painting of the first half of the eighth century, a time when it achieved its greatest originality. At the end of the fifth century these features were less clearly manifested. Despite their less slender proportions, large heads, large hands, and weak and thin legs, the figures that were depicted in early Sogdian paintings had certain merits that were later lost in the endeavor to depict the heroic narrative. Less concerned with the development of action, the early masters devoted much attention to the rendition of spatial depth and structured and complex compositions such as that found in the famous mourning scene (fig. 56). Sometimes they even showed the ground line in "perspective," indicating the lower line of the horizon on which the figures stood[143] (fig. 23). On the whole, the figural representations lacked the expressive quality of the later representations. But the faces, with their large eyes and large hands, demanded the attention of the viewer. In developing the form, the artists used all the devices of modeling, darkening the depths, shading the shadows and marking the projecting sections with white. The contours may be heavy or fine, broken or unbroken, and often somewhat coarse, but they are never flaccid. The expressiveness of the early paintings is achieved less through formal means than through the vigorous brushwork.

As in the well-known paintings of Toprak-kala and Mirān, echoes of the Hellenistic tradition are present in the early stage of the development of Sogdian painting which differ from murals of the first half of the eighth century. The later stage of Sogdian painting, exemplified by the murals from the *Small Hall*, Shahristan, has its own distinctive traits. By the time of this later stage (about the turn of the eighth–ninth centuries), the solemnity and heroic nature of the images is reduced as at Panjikent. This is accompanied by the presence of certain inaccuracies in the representation of realia. This loss, however, was compensated by the subtle professional virtuosity in draftsmanship and by an intensification of the deliberately sharpened and distinctive features of personages and events. In the three registers of paintings from the Shahristan royal hall which depict the battle of gods and men

143. Belenitskii, Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi," *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 60.

against *dēws*, the artist drew upon a varied repertory of scenes of entertainment.[144] Occasionally, the form may appear unusual because of the anatomically incorrect combination of stock elements, yet each time this apparent inaccuracy is justified by the artist's attempt to sharpen the characteristic features peculiar to a given theme. Such deliberate deviations are rarely found at Panjikent. The Shahristan masters also proved original in their application of color, making extensive use of exquisite combinations of green and blue, which were difficult to harmonize, and unknown at Panjikent.

The historical course of the Sogdian nation, which knew neither the power nor the oppression of the great monarchies of Asia, found its expression in a brilliant and dynamic art. Although its development was tragically interrupted in the eighth–ninth centuries, Sogdian art left its mark on the subsequent traditions of the nations of Middle Asia.

144. Negmatov, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov Ustrushany," *SA* 3 (1973), 195–196, figs. 13, 14; Sokolovskii, "O zhivopisi Malogo zala," *SGÉ* XXXIX (1974), 49–52.

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PART TWO

Sogdian Painting:
The Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art

by Guitty Azarpay

1. The Background: The Traditions of Early Medieval Painting in Transoxiana

The earliest reference to a tradition of wall painting in the Iranian world is known from an observation attributed by Athenaeus to Chares of Mitylene's work entitled *Stories of Alexander*, datable to the fourth century before Christ.[1] According to this source, the popularity of the Median romantic tale of Zariadres and Odatis was such that the Iranians had "pictures of the story in their temples and palaces and also in their private dwellings."[2] The story of Zariadres and Odatis, which was connected with the local Median cult of Anāhitā, has even survived in Persian sources by virtue of its adhesion to the east Iranian Kayanian cycle of epics in Sasanian times.[3]

If Chares' reference suggests the existence in Achaemenid times of a mural tradition in connection with popular tales outside the strict context of the Zoroastrian church, no evidence for it exists in material remains from that period.[4] The earliest existing fragments of murals from the Iranian world appear to date from the subsequent Hellenistic period, and these are essentially Greek in style and content (fig. 41).[5] A more substantial body of early murals, datable to the first

1. Athenaeus XIII:35, 575.

2. L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, Philological Monographs XX (New York: The American Philological Association, 1960), 39.

3. Mary Boyce, "Zariadres and Zarēr," *BSOAS* XVII:3 (1955), 470ff.

4. A. Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, Archaeologia Mundi (Cleveland/New York 1968), 210.

5. The earliest painting excavated at Ghāgha-shahr, Kūh-i-Khwāja, in Iranian Sistan, by Sir Aurel Stein, now in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum at New Delhi, shows a purely Hellenistic style and subject matter. Stein dates this painting to the Parthian or early Sasanian period, see *Innermost Asia, Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia, Kan-su and Eastern Iran* II (Oxford 1928), 913–921, fig. 467, pl. 54; F.H. Andrews, *Catalogue of Wall-Paintings from Ancient Shrines in Central Asia and Sistān* (Delhi 1933), vii, 58–59 (Gha. iv), pl. III. However, Herzfeld's later discoveries of Parthian murals at Kūh-i-Khwāja provide local antecedents for the Hellenistic style of the fragment discovered by Stein (Gha. iv). The date of the recently discovered mural with the representation of the Dioscuri, in northern Afghanistan, will remain uncertain until its fuller publication, see I. Kruglikova's note in *Afghanistan, Historical and Cultural Quarterly* XXV:3 (Kabul 1972), 99–100.

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four centuries after Christ, has survived in the east Iranian world where new Iranian dynasties had won control of territories controlled earlier by Hellenistic rulers. The characteristic mode of artistic expression adopted by these new Iranian dynasties was a mixed one, aptly termed *Graeco-Iranian* by Daniel Schlumberger.[6] Whereas Hellenistic (and later Graeco-Roman) stylistic and iconographic principles were retained, the subject matter of this mixed style was transformed to accommodate the demands of the new age. Thus while themes of Greek mythology recede into the background, those of immediate and local significance predominate.

That dynastic legitimacy was a pressing issue for the newly established east Iranian states is indicated by the institution of the dynastic cult in the Parthian, Kushan and Khwarezmian states. The ruler's claims and credentials are graphically expressed in the stone sculpture from the shrine and funerary monument at Commagene, a western forerunner of these dynastic shrines, built around the middle of the first century B.C., by the kings of Commagene, at Nimrud Dagh, in eastern Anatolia.[7] Dynastic legitimacy is here claimed on grounds of linear descent from the Achaemenid kings and by virtue of the divine sanction extended to the ruling house by the major gods of the Iranian pantheon and their Semitic and Graeco-Roman counterparts.

The establishment of the cult center in the new Iranian states apparently served a twofold purpose. It proclaimed the ruler's divinely sanctioned success, and it laid his exclusive claim to sovereignty on account of his proper lineage. The latter phenomenon led to the association of the dynastic shrine with an ancestral monument that housed idealized ancestral images. The ancestral shrines at Commagene and in Khwarezm, furthermore, assumed a clearly funerary function. The preeminence of the royal portrait and its association with divine imagery in the art of the new Iranian dynasties were interpreted by Daniel Schlumberger as indications of the deification of the ruler.[8] But the ruler portraits at Commagene and in the east Iranian shrines display strictly temporal ambitions. Their persistently worldly message is validated by divine intervention. The expression of the

6. D. Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient, die griechische und nachgriechische Kunst ausserhalb des Mittelmeerraumes*, Kunst der Welt (Baden-Baden 1969), 181–189.

7. F.K. Dörner, T. Goell, "Arsameia am Nymphaios," *Istanbuler Forschungen* 23 (Berlin 1963); F.K. Dörner et al., "Arsameia am Nymphaios," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1965), 188ff.; F.K. Dörner, "Arsameia am Nymphaios," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 16 (1966), 130–156; Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient*, 41ff.

8. Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient*, 189.

ruler's inherited rights and personal worth had to be authenticated by divine sanction. Thus the Greek cult of the divinized ruler that developed under the Seleucids differed from the new Iranian dynastic cults on one essential point. Whereas the Seleucid king claimed to be a personification of the godhead and derived authority from his claim of divine embodiment, the Iranian rulers asserted their authority by posing as deserving recipients of divine blessing.[9] Though permeated with Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman stylistic and iconographic conventions, the content of Graeco-Iranian art of the first four centuries was thus defined by secular and religious patterns that were peculiar to the new age.

Two groups of murals have been associated by Schlumberger with the east Iranian dynastic monuments of the first four centuries. The earliest group was uncovered in the early Kushan palace excavated by G. Pugachenkova at Khalchayan in northern Bactria, and the later group was excavated by Ernst Herzfeld in the east Parthian palace at Kūh-i-Khwāja in Sistan.[10] To Schlumberger's list of the Kushan monuments associated with the Graeco-Iranian artistic style should be added the murals from the palace and funerary monuments uncovered by S.P. Tolstov in ancient Khwarezm in the basin of the lower Oxus or Amu Dar'ya River (see map 2).[11]

The early Kushan, Parthian and Khwarezmian murals demonstrate, if on a progressively diminishing scale, the use of Hellenistic stylistic features expressed in the modulated line, the effect of plastic modeling, the relatively realistic postures and proportions of figures, and in the treatment of drapery. The use of the three-quarter view of the head, the soft curled hair and idealized features of Hellenistic art seen in the murals from Khalchayan and Kūh-i-Khwāja[12] are distantly recalled in the strong-jawed and pouting faces of Khwarezmian art (pl. 2).[13] If the Hellenistic

9. G. Azarpay, "Crowns and Some Royal Insignia in Early Iran," *Iranica Antiqua* IX (1972), 108–115.

10. E. Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East* (New York/Oxford 1941), 291–301; idem, *AMI* IV, 1–116; idem, *Archaeological History of Iran* (London 1935), 38. G.A. Pugachenkova, *Khalchayan, k probleme khudozhestvennoi kul'tury severnoi Baktrii* (Tashkent 1966), 144–153; eadem, *Skul'ptura Khalchayana* (Moskva 1971), 128.

11. S.P. Tolstov, *Arkheologicheskie i ėtnograficheskie raboty khorezmskoi ėkspeditsii 1945–1948*, *TKhAĖĖ* I, (1952), 40ff., figs. 28, 30; idem, *Arkheologicheskie ėtnograficheskie raboty khorezmskoi ėkspeditsii 1949–1953*, *TKhAĖĖ* II (1958), 213f., figs. 99–100; G.A. Pugachenkova, L.I. Rempel', *Istoriia iskusstv Uzbekistana c drevneishikh vremen do serediny deviatnadtsatogo veka* (Moskva 1965), 87–88, figs. 85–86; S.P. Tolstov, B.I. Vainberg, *Koi-krylgan-kala, pamiatnik kul'tury drevnego Khorezma IV v. do n. ė.–IV v. n. ė.* (Moskva 1967), 214–215, fig. 80.

12. See above, n. 10.

13. See above, n. 11.

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style and iconography were adopted for the imagery of Iranian gods in Graeco-Iranian art, as indicated by the inscribed Kushan coin representations of Iranian gods, the local Iranian dress and a linear and hieratic style were reserved for royal portraits.[14]

It is unnecessary to debate and elaborate here on the chronological problems that have been raised in connection with the Khalchayan palace and the Parthian murals from Kūh-i-Khwāja.[15] It may be noted, however, that Schlumberger's attribution of the Khalchayan palace and its murals to the first century A.D., and his preference for a late Parthian date for the Kūh-i-Khwāja murals, are more acceptable on stylistic grounds than the earlier dates proposed for these sites by their excavators. The linear and flat treatment of the figures in the Kūh-i-Khwāja murals, and the presence there of specifically Kushan artistic devices, would argue for their association with the Toprak-kala murals from the Khwarezmian palace that was destroyed by the Sasanians probably in the early third century.[16] Thus if the early Kushan murals from the Khalchayan palace represent the earliest examples of painting from the new era of the east Iranian dynasties, those from Toprak-kala (and probably Kūh-i-Khwāja) exemplify the latest phase.

It is noteworthy that whereas the dynastic and secular tradition continued into the third century in the art of Khwarezm and in that of the Parthian world, it was replaced in Kushan Bactria by Graeco-Buddhist art in the second century.[17] The development of canonical Buddhist images in Graeco-Buddhist art contributed to the perpetuation of Graeco-Iranian stylistic traits which were soon lost or transformed in the early medieval artistic traditions of Sasanian Persia and non-Buddhist Transoxiana.

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The earliest examples of Graeco-Buddhist wall paintings are known from the north Bactrian Buddhist cave monastery at Termez, datable to the second and

14. Sir Mark Aurel Stein, "Zoroastrian Deities on Indo-Scythian Coins," *The Babylonian and Oriental Record* (London 1887), 155–166; idem, in *Indian Antiquary* (Bombay 1888), 89ff.; J. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1969), passim.

15. Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient*, 59ff.

16. On the question of Khwarezmian chronology, see G. Azarpay, "Nine Inscribed Choresmian Bowls," *Artibus Asiae* 1969, 185–203. For a discussion of the "Bactrian" traits in the murals from Kūh-i-Khwāja, see Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient*, 59. On Indian features in the art of Khwarezm, see S.P. Tolstov, *Po drevnim del'tam Oksa i IAksarta* (Moskva 1962), 213ff.; and its critique in G. Azarpay, "The Civilizations of Transoxiana in Parthian and Sassanian Times," section on Khwarezm I, *Cambridge History of Iran* III (in press).

17. Schlumberger, *Der hellenisierte Orient*, 185–189; B. Rowland, *The Evolution of the Buddha Image* (New York 1963), 11ff.

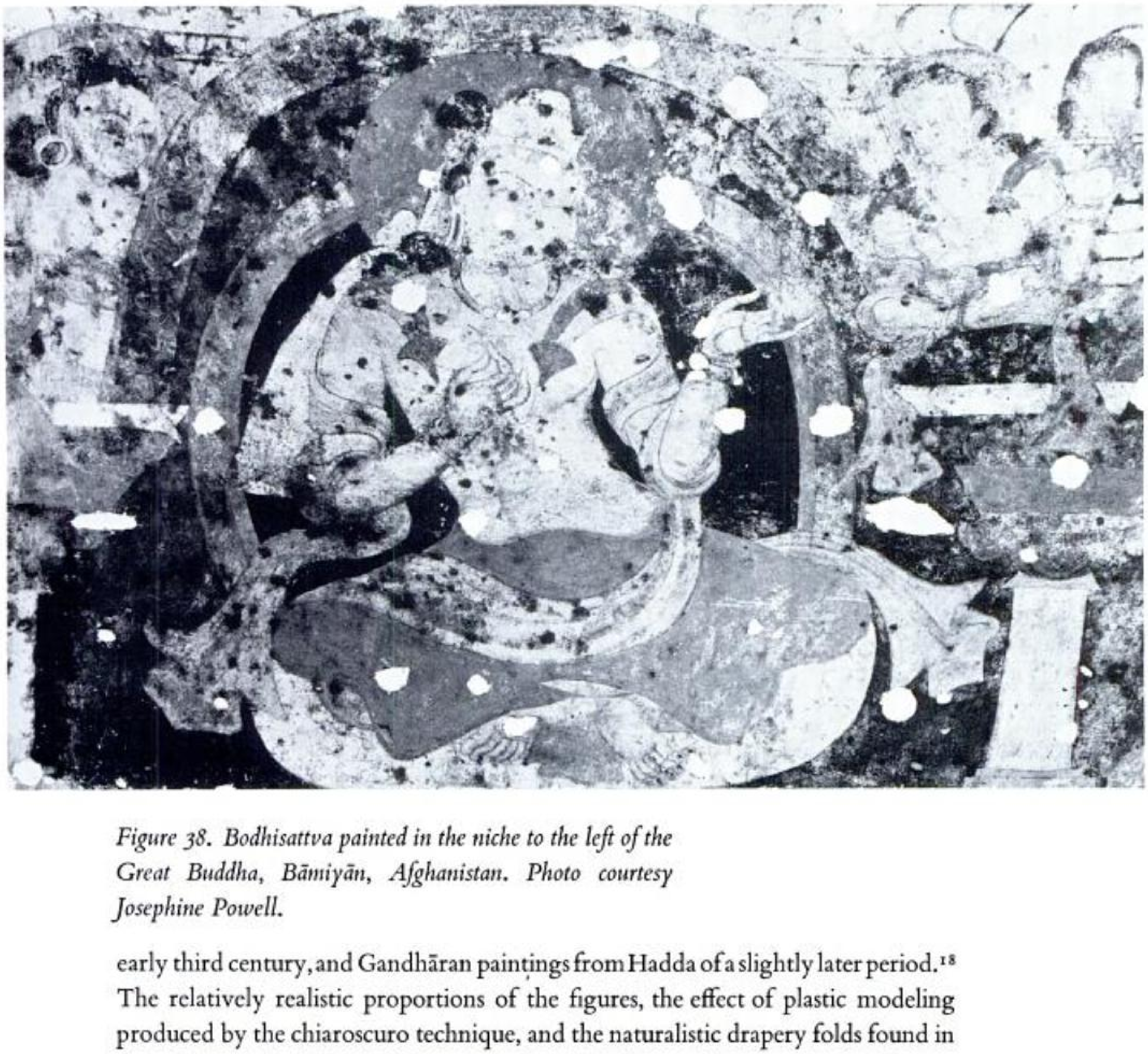

Figure 38. Bodhisattva painted in the niche to the left of the Great Buddha, Bāmiyān, Afghanistan. Photo courtesy Josephine Powell.

early third century, and Gandhāran paintings from Hadda of a slightly later period.[18] The relatively realistic proportions of the figures, the effect of plastic modeling produced by the chiaroscuro technique, and the naturalistic drapery folds found in these Graeco-Buddhist paintings perpetuate the Graeco-Roman style which was

18. B. IA. Staviskii, *Kara-tepe, buddiiskii peshchernyi monastyr v starom Termeze* I–III (Moskva 1964, 1969, 1972), for the murals see vol. III, pls. IV–V; idem, "K otkrytiiam na Kara-tepe," *Iskusstvo* 7 (Moskva 1972), 63–66, figs. on pp. 64, 66. On the murals from Hadda, see M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia* (Editions d'Art Albert Skira, Geneva 1963), 36, 124:2; M. Hallade, "Indo-Iranian Art," *Encyclopaedia of World Art* VIII (Rome 1963), 2–18, pl. 5; B. Rowland, *The Art of Central Asia* (New York 1974), 36–39.

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Figure 39. Female donor painted on the vault to the right of the Great Buddha, Bāmiyān, Afghanistan. Photo courtesy Josephine Powell.

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thence passed to the third century Buddhist paintings of Mirān in Eastern Turkestan.[19] Hellenistic vestiges survived even later in the archaistic style of the Buddhist images of Central Asia long after their disappearance from the secular arts of that area.

The Graeco-Buddhist tradition of southern Tukhāristān (the term used to refer to Bactria in early medieval times), represented by the cave paintings of Bāmiyān (figs. 38–39), Kakrak and Fundukistān,[20] in Afghanistan, is also met in northern

19. Sir Mark Aurel Stein, *Serindia: Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China* (Oxford 1921), vol. II, 456ff., vol. IV, pls. XL–XLV; Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, 18ff.; idem, *Culture e civiltà dell'Asia Centrale* (Torino 1971), 151; Rowland, *The Art of Central Asia*, 30ff.

Tukhāristān (along the right bank of the upper Oxus). However, the murals uncovered in the Buddhist monastery at Ajina-tepe, in the lower Vakhsh Valley in northern Tukhāristān, introduce the strictly linear and two-dimensional qualities of the secular painting style into an otherwise Graeco-Buddhist artistic context.[21] The linear and two-dimensional style also prevailed in the non-Buddhist art of southern Tukhāristān, as exemplified by the murals from Dukhtar-i-Nushirvān and Dalverzin.[22]

B.A. Litvinsky and T.I. Zeymal have sought the origin of the Buddhist art of northern Tukhāristān, preserved in the murals and sculpture of Ajina-tepe, in the traditions of Gupta India, Bactria (Graeco-Buddhist art), and the non-Buddhist art of Tukhāristān.[23] Different proportions of the same influences were doubtless largely responsible for local variations in the Buddhist art of the various cave monastries in southern Tukhāristān.

The Graeco-Buddhist art of Tukhāristān and Gandhāra found further development in the early medieval Buddhist art of Serindia. But if a strain of the Sogdian wall painting tradition contributed to the development of the Buddhist art of some of the oasis cities of the Tarim basin,[24] that strain must surely have originated in the Buddhist art of Transoxiana, as exemplified by the material from Ajina-tepe, rather than in the non-Buddhist and secular schools of Sogdian painting.

The earliest example of the non-Buddhist secular art of the early medieval period in Transoxiana is represented by murals uncovered at the site of Balalyk-tepe,

20. Bāmiyān and Kakrak: A. Godard et al., *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* II (Paris 1928); J. Hackin, J. Carl, *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* III (Paris 1933); J. Hackin et al., *Diverses recherches archéologiques en Afghanistan (1933–1940)*, *MDAFA* VIII (Paris 1959); Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, 36ff.; B. Rowland, *Ancient Art from Afghanistan* (New York 1966); idem, *The Art of Central Asia*, 79ff. Fundukistān: J. Hackin et al., *Diverses recherches archéologiques en Afghanistan (1933–1940)*, *MDAFA* VIII (Paris 1959); J. Hackin, "The Buddhist Monastery of Fondukistan," *The Journal of the Greater India Society* VII:1 (Calcutta 1940), 1–14, and VII:2, 85–91; B. Rowland, "The Bejewelled Buddha in Afghanistan," *Artibus Asiae* XXIV:1 (1961), 20–24; idem, *The Art of Central Asia*, 116; D. Barrett, "Sculptures of the Shāhi Period," *Oriental Art* III:2 (1957), 54–59.

21. B.A. Litvinsky, T.I. Zeymal, *Adzhina-Tepa: Architecture, Painting, Sculpture* (Moskva 1971), 57–67.

22. A. Godard et al., in *MDAFA* II (Paris 1928), 65–74; I.T. Kruglikova, V.I. Sarianidi, "Drevniaia Baktriia v svete novykh arkheologicheskikh otkrytii," *SA* 4 (1971), 154–177. I wish to thank Professor George Dales for this reference.

23. Litvinsky, Zeymal, *Adzhina-Tepa*, 237–238.

24. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, 48.

Figure 40. Banqueters depicted in the mural on the west wall of the principal hall at Balalyk-tepe, Uzbekistan SSR. Sixth–seventh century. Sketch after Al'baum, Balalyktepe, *fig. 105.*

north of Termez, in the Surkhan Dar'ya basin, in northern Tukhāristān, in present-day Uzbekistan SSR (fig. 40, pl. 3, map 2). The Sogdian "Bukhara letters" found on coins from this site, suggest a date from the fifth century[25] (see *Part One*, p. 49). Balalyk-tepe was evidently the site of a country seat with a fortress that underwent reconstruction following the period of Hephthalite rule, after the middle of the sixth century, when its rectangular central hall was decorated with wall paintings. The murals, which reached a height of 1.8 m from the *ṣuffa* (continuous wall bench), depicted an array of male and female banqueters and their attendants (pl. 3, fig. 40). Placed against a flat patterned background, the reclining and seated figures are arranged in groups in a shallow pictorial space in which emphasis is placed on contrasting areas of flat color, ornamental pattern, and the interrelationship of two-dimensional forms. The standard proportions, facial features, dress and groupings enhance the overall compositional harmony. Variations in dress pattern, gesture, orientation of the figures and their eye movements punctuate the continuous composition with areas of special interest. But these accents are indicated with uniform intensity and without a dramatic emphasis or climax.

As representative murals from the post-Kushan or the early medieval period in

25. L. I. Al'baum, *Balalyk-tepe, k istorii material'noi kul'tury i iskusstva Tokharistana* (Tashkent 1960).

Transoxiana, the Balalyk-tepe paintings appear suddenly with a consistent stylistic and iconographic repertory in which Hellenistic features are conspicuously absent. To reconstruct the processes by which the Graeco-Iranian style underwent transformation in the early medieval art of Transoxiana we must turn to comparable material from neighboring cultures. Contemporaneous comparisons are offered both by Central Asian Buddhist paintings and by the secular but fragmentary murals from Sasanian Persia. Murals from the early and middle Sasanian palaces at Susa and Damghan preserve an echo of the linear and two-dimensional style and restricted thematic repertory of the official court art, better known from other media.[26] If the realization of the earlier tendency towards a linear and two-dimensional style associates the Sasanian mural tradition with that at Balalyk-tepe, the two differ markedly in theme, iconography and emphasis. The relatively informal mood, distinctive dress, and the absence of a central or dominant image distinguish the Balalyk-tepe murals from the rigidly formal compositions and the conventional iconographic repertory of the Sasanian court style. Since Sasanian artistic traits appear in combination with features peculiar to the Balalyk-tepe murals in the earlier Graeco-Iranian artistic style, their later bifurcation may be attributed to independent internal developments within the two later traditions. Thus whereas the earlier Graeco-Iranian patterns were channeled in the direction of an official court style in Sasanian Persia, they crystallized as the narrative and illustrative style of Transoxiana in early medieval times. In Transoxiana, where artistic standards were not subject to official approval as in Sasanian Persia, there appeared some diversification of artistic practices in the various workshops which were related, nevertheless, in the style and content of their art at the beginning of the early medieval period. Thus Graeco-Roman stylistic traits which were retained in the non-Buddhist Sogdian paintings of the fifth and sixth centuries from Panjikent reflect the earlier patterns of Kushan art that were abandoned in the late sixth and early seventh century murals (pl. 3, fig. 40, see *Part One*, p. 35f.).

26. For fragments of the Sasanian wall paintings, see R. Ghirshman, *Persian Art, the Parthian and Sassanian Dynasties, 249 B.C.–A.D. 651* (New York 1962), 183, fig. 224 (third to fourth century mural from Susa), also reference to murals from Eiwan-i-Kerkha (fourth century). A late fifth to sixth century fragment is also known from the Sasanian palace at Damghan, E. F. Schmidt, *Excavations at Tepe Hissar, Damghan* (Philadelphia 1937), 337–338, figs. 174–175. The linear and two-dimensional style of these Sasanian murals contrasts with the third century Sasanian mosaics from Bishapur where the Graeco-Roman style was emulated in the wake of Shapur's conquests in the west, see R. Ghirshman, *Fouilles de Châpour, Bîchâpour* II, Musée du Louvre, Département des antiquités orientales, série archéologique VII (Paris 1956).

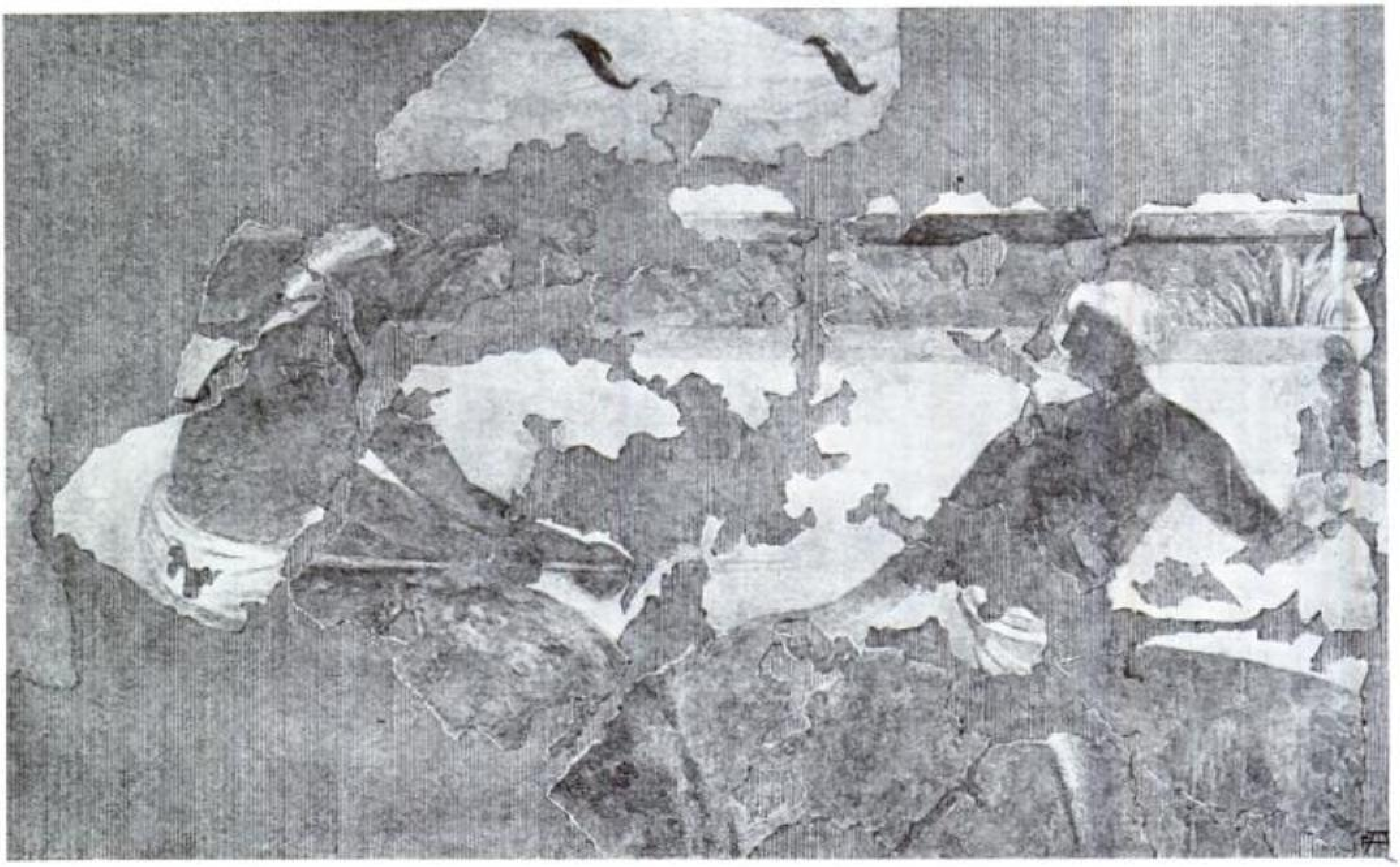

Figure 41. Early Sasanian mural from Ghāgha-shahr IV, Kūh-i-Khwāja, Sistan, showing two male figures. Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi, height 5 feet, width 7.3 feet. Copy after Stein, Innermost Asia *III, pl. 54.*

An intermediate position between the official Sasanian court art and the secular and narrative tradition of Transoxiana is occupied by murals of early and middle Sasanian date from Sistan. The mural from Ghāgha-shahr IV, Kūh-i-Khwāja, dated by Sir Aurel Stein to the early Sasanian period, was executed on mud plaster, and constituted a single register that depicted two male figures. Both figures, a youthful Greek type and an older man, were depicted with bare torsos painted pink with traces of broad soft outlines in red. Above the figures was depicted an acanthus band superimposed by a pattern of tied leaves (fig. 41). The Ghāgha-shahr IV

mural with its Hellenistic style and iconography stands in sharp contrast to the Middle Sasanian mural from Ghāgha-shahr I, also uncovered by Stein.[27] The latter shows two superimposed registers of figures painted in tempera on mud plaster. Three of the four figures preserved in the lower register direct their attention towards a seated figure on the left side of the composition. The latter figure wears a diadem and a korymbos composed of "a mass of imbrications like a fir cone," and holds an ox-headed mace. His richly patterned garment, relatively large proportions, and reclining posture distinguish him as a royal or high ranking personage. He is confronted by a three-headed figure who stands in a supplicatory pose with palms opened outwards. One of the two figures behind him is crowned and appears to extend a dish towards the seated figure. The fantastic and legendary quality of this scene led Stein to identify the seated figure as the Sistanian hero Rustam. But his ox-headed mace, royal attire, and his tricephalic antagonist would seem to associate him rather with Farīdūn. If Farīdūn's triumph over the impious tricephalic Ḍaḥḥāk, accomplished by means of the royal hero's ox-headed mace, is recorded in its dramatic moment in Parthian art,[28] its result is perhaps suggested in the later Sistanian mural. The Ghāgha-shahr I mural is distinguished from the official court art of Sasanian Persia not only in its epic interest, but also in the effect of plastic modeling produced by the illusionistic treatment of the heads, and in the dress of the figures depicted in the damaged upper register. The features that distinguish the Sistanian mural from the Sasanian court art are precisely those that associate it with artistic developments in Transoxiana.

A richer body of comparative material for our study of the secular tradition of painting in Transoxiana is offered by the Buddhist cave paintings from southern Tukhāristān. However, the chronological value of the Buddhist paintings, with their twofold origin in Gupta India and the Graeco-Buddhist art of Central Asia, will remain uncertain until the dates and stylistic sequence of the paintings from Bāmiyān, Kakrak and Fundukistān are more fully and definitively established.[29]

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27. Stein, *Innermost Asia* II, 913–921, pl. 54, fig. 468; Andrews, *Catalogue of the Wall-Paintings from Ancient Shrines in Central Asia and Sistān*, vii, 57–58, height of the mural is 6 ft 4 ins., its width 7 ft.

28. A.D.H. Bivar, "A Parthian Amulet," *BSOAS* XXX:3 (1967), 512–525.

29. See above, n. 20, also B. Rowland, "The Dating of the Sasanian Paintings at Bamiyan and Dukhtar-i-Nushirvan," *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute* VI:1–4, VII:1, 1946 (The Asia Institute, New York 1946), 35–42; idem, *The Art of Central Asia*, 79ff.; M. Hallade, "Indo-Iranian Art," *Encyclopaedia of World Art* VIII (Rome 1963), 2–18; R. Göbl, *Dokumente zur Geschichte der iranischen Hunnen in Baktrien und Indien* II (Wiesbaden 1967), 266–267.

Besides the obvious thematic difference between the Balalyk-tepe banquet scene and the religiously inspired Buddhist cave paintings from Tukhāristān, the two are closely connected by style and iconography. A striking parallel to the Balalyk-tepe murals is offered by files of donors represented on the right and left walls of the vault of the 34 m Buddha at Bāmiyān (figs. 39–40).[30] The majority of the male donors in this series is dressed in the belted jacket with a wide lapel opened on the right side. The cropped hair and the round beardless heads of the men shown in three-quarter view, the sleeveless cape of one of the women, and the standardized and distinctive physiognomy of the figures[31] associate these donor portraits with the Balalyk-tepe banqueters. Similar traits are met also in some of the figures depicted in a mural recently uncovered at Dilberjin, in northern Afghanistan, and in other media in Central Asian art.[32] Differences between the attributes of the Balalyk-tepe figures and the Bāmiyān donors may be taken as a sign of their differing religious orientations. Thus whereas the Balalyk-tepe banqueters balance stemmed cups between forefinger and thumb, and delicately grasp long-handled mirrors,[33] the Buddhist donors in the Bāmiyān paintings grasp lotus branches or offer wreaths, diadems and rings. The men in the Balalyk-tepe paintings wear twisted torques, ribbons, bracelets, weapons and belt attachments. The women there wear bead clusters in their ears, discs and roundels on neck bands, and fasten their capes by means of trailing scarves passed through ring perforations in their capes (pl. 3).[34] These iconographic details are not exactly duplicated in the Bāmiyān donor portraits. Yet the remarkable overall stylistic and iconographic resemblance

30. Godard et al., *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān, MDAFA* II (Paris 1928), pl. 23.

31. The round, beardless heads of the Balalyk-tepe banquet scene are deliberately distinguished there from the bearded profiles used as a fabric pattern, see Al'baum, *Balalyk-tepe*, fig. 148. These bearded profiles, on the other hand, have been associated by Pugachenkova with a Bactrian facial type represented among the clay sculptures from the early Kushan palace at Khalchayan, see *Skul'ptura Khalchaiana*, 197, pl. 76.

32. I.T. Kruglikova, V.I. Sarianidi, "Drevniaia Baktriia v svete novykh arkheologicheskikh otkrytii," *SA* 4 (1971), 154–177; Al'baum, *Balalyk-tepe*, 177; B.IA. Staviskii, "O datirovke i proiskhozhdenii ėrmitazhnoi serebrianoi chashi s izobrazheniem venchaniia tsaria," *SGĖ* XVII (1960), 67–71.

33. The long-handled "wand" is clearly a mirror in the hand of the female banqueter in Hephthalite dress on the silver bowl in the Hermitage, see Staviskii, in *SGĖ* XVII (1960), 67–71.

34. The fastening device found on the capes of the women in the Balalyk-tepe murals, like that depicted on the Gupta bust of the sun god in Hephthalite attire (H. Zimmer, in *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art V* [Calcutta 1937], p. 129, pl. XV:4), recalls the Chinese use of a jade ring for fastening scarves. This device appears in Chinese Buddhist art at the end of the fifth century where it replaces the earlier Central Asian dress associated with Buddhist images, see B. Rowland, *The Evolution of the Buddha Image*, 23, pl. 40; Terukazu Akiyama et al., *Arts of China, Buddhist Cave Temples* (Tokyo/Palo Alto 1969), pl. 21.

between the two sets of paintings would argue for their association with the artistic tradition of the Hephthalite ruling classes of Tukhāristān that survived the downfall of Hephthalite power in A.D. 557.[35]

The survival of Sasanian iconography, noted in connection with some of the royal portraits among the donor series from Bāmiyān,[36] is more pronounced in the Hephthalite royal portrait painted on the rock-cut niche at Dukhtar-i-Nushirvān, north of Bāmiyān.[37] The crown type, regalia and posture of the eighth century ruler of Zābulistān, depicted here, are deliberate revivals of earlier Sasanian models.[38] However, these are superimposed over an architectural setting based on local models known from Bāmiyān, Kakrak and Fundukistān.

It is not the intention of this survey to exaggerate the importance of the provincial school of wall painting, datable to the sixth to seventh century, that has by chance survived at Balalyk-tepe. The intention is rather to identify and analyze the relatively well documented examples of wall painting from the formative stage in the development of early medieval painting in Transoxiana. For the florescence of that style we turn to the Sogdian tradition of the fifth to eighth centuries.

The earliest Sogdian paintings, datable on archaeological grounds to the late fifth to early sixth century, are those uncovered in the town of Panjikent on the left bank of the middle Zarafshan River (see *Part One*, p. 40f., map 2). The presence in the earliest paintings at Panjikent of iconographic and stylistic parallels to the secular painting tradition of Tukhāristān is to be expected in the non-Buddhist context of Sogdian art. Noteworthy, however, are the reminiscences of Gandhāran and Graeco-Buddhist stylistic conventions met in the treatment of drapery in Sogdian religious imagery, and in the oval, beardless and somewhat idealized heads of secular figures in the earliest Panjikent murals. Such differences between the first murals from Transoxiana of the early medieval age thus indicate the diversity of artistic practices in the earliest workshops. Indeed, despite the consistency of Sogdian artistic norms, differences may be observed even within the Sogdian

35. The crowns of the royal figures depicted in the donor series from Bāmiyān recall Hephthalite crowns of the type shown on the coins of Khingila, dated to the fifth century, see Göbl, *Dokumente* II, 59ff., II, pls. 26:85, 97:2–3.

36. Ibid.

37. Divergent views have been expressed on the identification and chronology of this painting, cf. Godard et al., *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* II, 1928, 65–74, pls. XLI–XLIII, figs. 25–27; R. Ghirshman, *Les Chionites–Hephtalites*, *MDAFA* XIII (Le Caire 1948), 125, n. 3; B. Rowland, "The Dating of the Sasanian Paintings at Bamiyan and Dukhtar-i-Nushirvan," *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute* VI:1–4, VII:1 (New York 1946), 35–42; R. Ghirshman, *Persian Art*, 318.

38. Göbl, *Dokumente* I–IV, nos. 216, 216a, pls. 51–52, passim.

schools as exemplified by the later murals from Panjikent, Samarkand and Varakhsha.

The Sogdian tradition of wall painting, like that of Tukhāristān, was thus built in part upon conventions developed earlier in the Graeco-Iranian art of the Kushans and other east Iranian dynasties of the first four centuries after Christ. But a pressing demand existed also for an art that would adequately express the spirit of the new age within the cultural context of non-Buddhist Central Asia. This demand resulted in a search for new stylistic and thematic standards, and it was met in the choice of a linear and two-dimensional style in wall painting and in the development of a relevant thematic repertory. The principal contribution of Sogdian painting of the early medieval age lies in its exploitation of the potential of these stylistic objectives, and in the development of a richly narrative and locally meaningful subject matter.

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2. The Theme: Subject Matter and Iconography in Secular Imagery

The Pictorial Epic

The major body of Sogdian wall painting has been discovered in the principal rooms of private residences (figs. 1–4, 18–19, pls. 4–20). Scenes of legendary, historic and popular interest appear either as the exclusive ornament of the walls, or they are distributed around a divine image frequently represented on the wall opposite the entrance (fig. 3).

In contrast to the hieratic and self-contained compositions in religious imagery (see below, chapter 3), heroic and epic cycles are generally depicted as a sequence of episodes in one or more registers of continuous narration (figs. 42–44, pls. 4–20). The importance of the epic and historic themes is suggested by their allocation to a medial position on the walls where they would have been immediately and easily perceived by the viewer. The monumental dimensions of the figures in such scenes, and the use of brilliant colors, further distinguish epic and historical narratives from popular themes and teleological narratives that were depicted in light colors and as small isolated compositions (pls. 10, 12, 13). Moreover, the latter were frequently relegated to the lowermost register of the walls at a level slightly above the floor.

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The heroic legend, preserved in the triple register of continuous narration from *Panjikent VI:41*, represents a rare example of a narrative sequence for which positive identification has been offered (figs. 42–44, pls. 4–11). The exploits of the hero depicted in this mural were compared by Belenitskii to those of the hero Rustam whose legend is recorded in a Sogdian fragment from Tun-huang[1] (see *Introductory Note*, p. 7). Moreover, variations between the Rustam legend recorded in the

1. E. Benveniste, *Textes Sogdiens* III, *Mission Pelliot en Asie Centrale* (Paris 1940), fragment 13, 134ff.; W.B. Henning, "Sogdian Tales," *BSOAS* XI:3 (1945), no. 2; E. Yarshater, "Rustam dar zabān i Soghdi," *Mihr* VIII, 406–411; A.M. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta, zhivopis', skul'ptura* (Moskva 1973), 47.

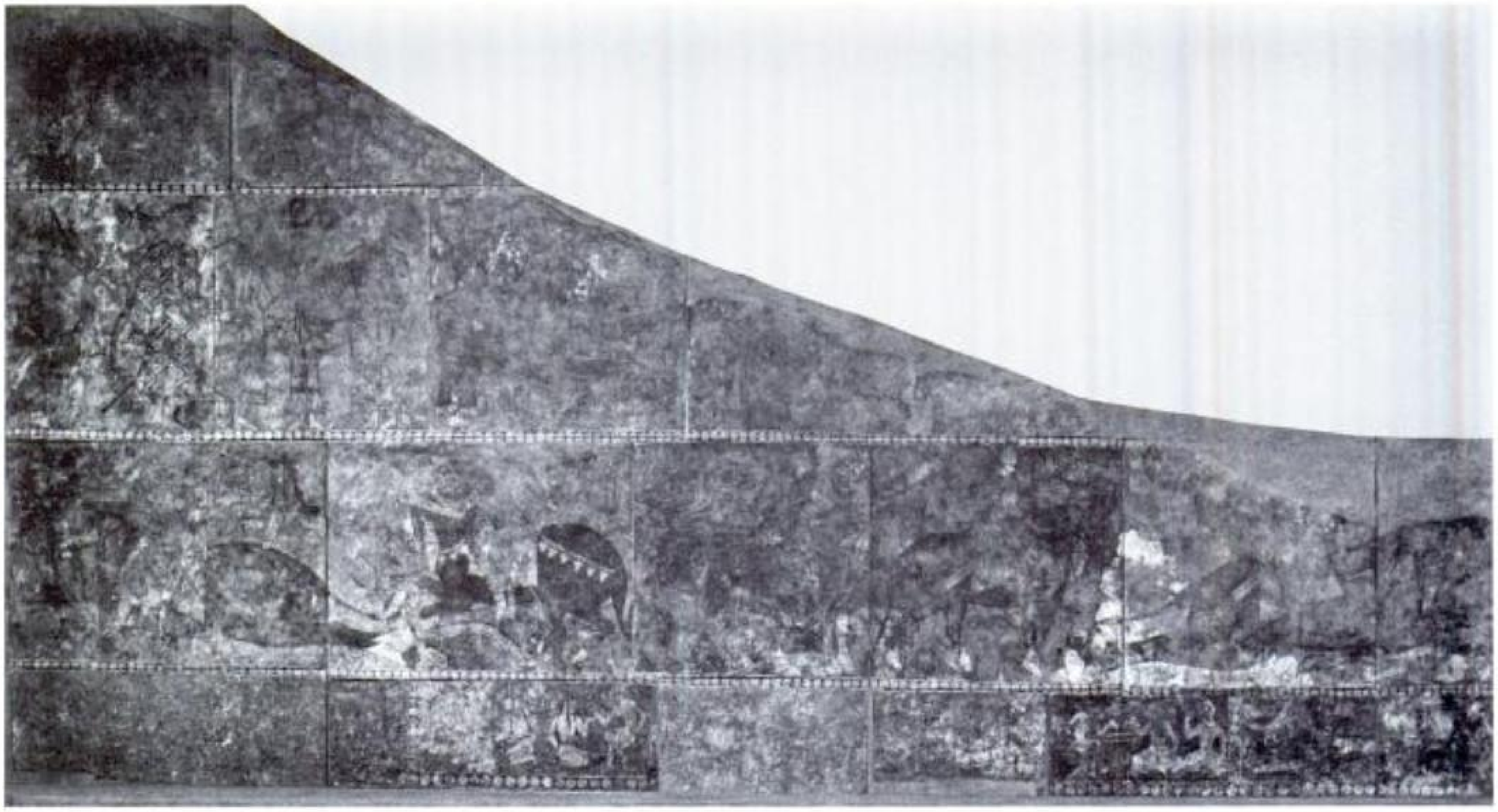

Figure 42. Sogdian mural depicting episodes from the "Rustam cycle," north wall of Panjikent VI:41, *The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. Photo courtesy Josephine Powell.*

Sogdian fragment and the later Persian Rustam cycle, recorded in Firdausi's *Shāhnāma*, suggest the existence in eastern Iran of a separate cycle of Rustam legends in pre-Islamic times. The Rustam legend which was attributed earlier to the indigenous pre-Saka literary tradition of Sistan[2] may be seen rather as a story that was not irrevocably connected to any single or historical personage. The Persian Rustam, as well as the hero of a Saka cycle, was an example of a hero that figured in a specific type of story content in the secular and oral literature transmitted from a pre-Christian era.[3] The story behind the Rustam cycle, therefore,

2. T. Nöldeke, *Das iranische Nationalepos* (Heidelberg 1920), 11.

3. For an analysis of the characteristics of such oral epics, see A.B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass. 1960), 120f.; M. Boyce, "Some Remarks on the Transmission of the Kayanian Heroic Cycle," *Serta Cantabrigiensia* (Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden 1954), 51, n. 1; eadem, "Zariadres and Zarer," *BSOAS* XVII:3 (1955), 473–475; eadem, "The Parthian *gōsān* and the Iranian Minstrel Tradition," *JRAS* 1–2 (1957), 19.

represented the "script" for a play in which the dramatis personae were subject to change. The medium for the transmission of this cycle has been sought in court-poetry of celebration and entertainment characteristic of a heroic age.[4] Such literature apparently flourished in Iran with unbroken continuity for about a thousand years from the period of the Kayanian cycles in pre-Zoroastrian times down to the Sasanian period when it was first committed to writing. The fact that the Sogdian Rustam fragment was written in prose, rather than in verse, may suggest a later or post-Islamic date for the versification of some of the Iranian epics.[5]

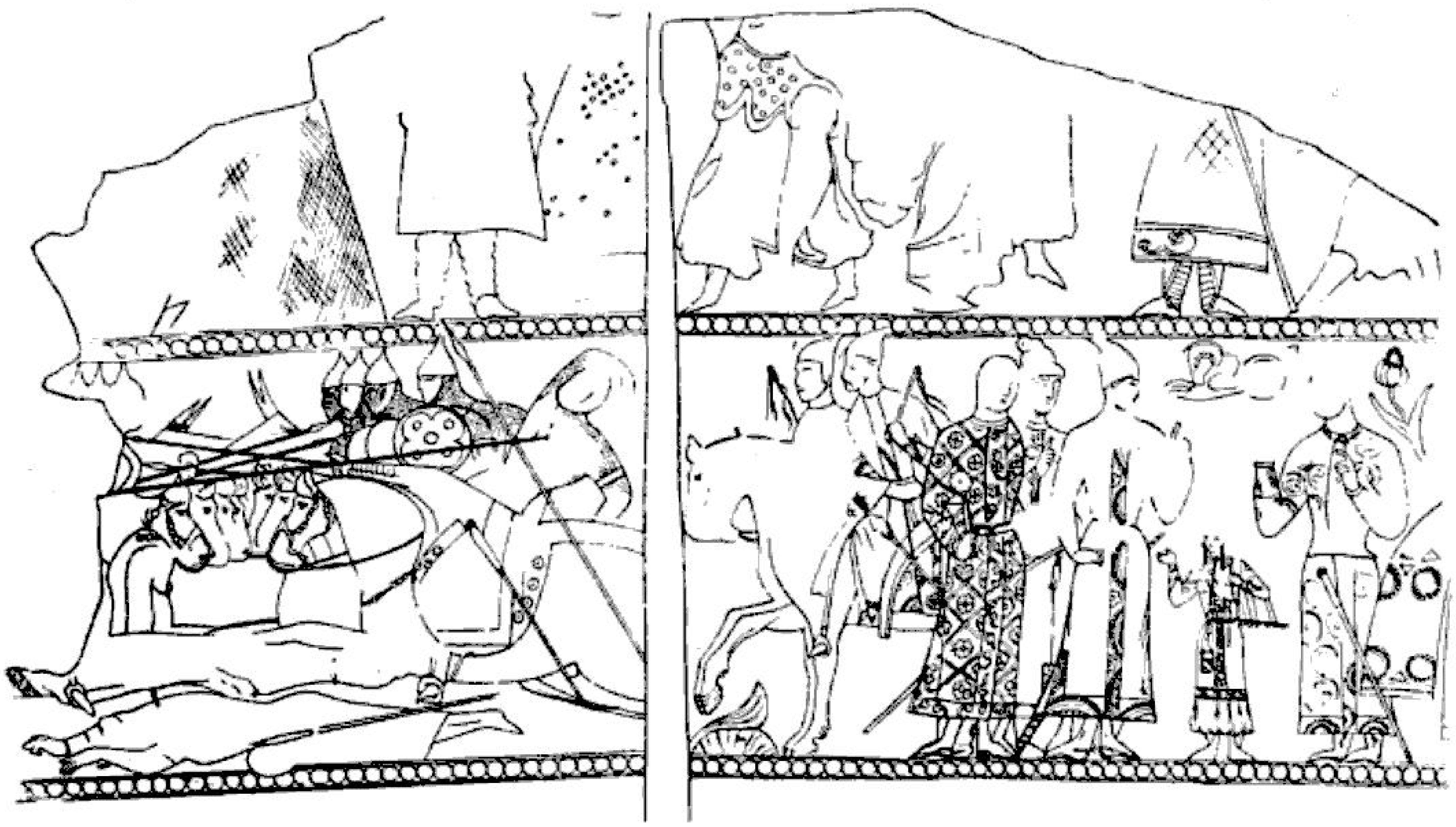

Figure 43. Sogdian mural depicting episodes from the "Rustam cycle," west and north walls, Panjikent VI:41. *Sketch after Belenitskii, in* Materialy vtorogo soveshchaniia arkheologov i ėtnografov Srednei Azii, *1959, fig. 4.*

4. Boyce, "Some Remarks on the Transmission," 46.

5. Ibid., 52. On the late date of the versification of the Iranian epics, see G. Lazard, "The Rise of the New Persian Language," *The Cambridge History of Iran* 4 (Cambridge 1975), 625.

Figure 44. Sogdian mural depicting episodes from the "Rustam cycle," north wall, Panjikent VI:41. *Sketch after Belenitskii, in* KSIIMK *73, 1959, fig. 35.*

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Like Greek and Teutonic poetry, Iranian oral literature was cultivated by the aristocracy in a society in which the breakdown of tribal law and bonds of kinship was accompanied by a new unrestrained individualism expressed according to codes of social conduct and expression. It was the aristocracy that defined the style and spirit of this tradition.[6]

As Chadwick wrote,

"That which they prize above all else is the ability to indulge their desires to the full—in feasting and every form of enjoyment for themselves, in unlimited generosity to their friends, in ferocious vindictiveness towards their foes . . . the hold which these poems have exercised on subsequent ages, in very different stages of culture, is due not only to their artistic qualities but also to the absorbing interest of the situations which they depict. This interest rises very largely from the extraordinary freedom from restraint enjoyed by the characters in the gratification of their feelings and desires and from the tremendous and sudden vicissitudes of fortune to which they are exposed.[7]

6. Boyce, "The Parthian *gōsān*," passim; H.M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age* (Cambridge 1912), 462–463; H.M. Chadwick and N.K. Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature* I (Cambridge 1932), 64ff.

7. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age*, 462–463.

The worth of such a hero was tested by an ordeal that demanded courage, endurance, enterprise and violent action. The Iranian *pahlavān*, no less than the Medieval French *chevalier*, the Old German *held*, the Russian *bogatyr'*, or the Tatar *batyr*, was regarded as a member of a superior class of men who risked their lives in pursuit of honor gained through action. When human foes were lacking, heroic man fought against powers of nature or against the more formidable and unpredictable powers embodied by monsters. Even in the absence of enemies or dangerous quests, such heroes sought honor through intense action in athletic contests.[8]

The hero of such literature was a marked man from the start, whose superiority was connected with his unusual birth and breeding. Thus Rustam's birth by Caesarean section was achieved through the advice given to his father Zāl by the magical bird Sīmorgh. The Armenian Bagdasar and Samsar were conceived after their mother drank from a magical spring. The Canaanite Aqhat was born as a result of the intercession of Baal with the supreme god El. Gilgamesh was two-thirds divine, and his friend Enkidu was made of desert clay by the goddess Aruru.[9]

The Gāthās of Zoroaster preserve allusions to an age of strife, raids and feuds when such a ruling aristocracy, the kavis, dominated the vulnerable pastoral population of eastern Iran. Vištāspa, the patron of Zoroaster, carried the title of kavi in the sense of "king" in the Gāthās. However, when the Gāthās mentioned other kavis they referred to hostile princes who followed the rival religion of the Daēvas. In the Yašts the title of kavi precedes the names of the last of such kings in the dynasty that followed the fabulous first kings (the Pišdādiān).[10] If the rejection of the life-style of the kavis by the Zoroastrian church led to a suppression of accounts of their martial exploits in Zoroastrian literature, it evidently did not crush the development of a secular literature of entertainment at the courts of the aristocracy in Zoroastrian times.[11] Iranian epic poetry is thus traced by Mary Boyce to an oral literature of entertainment transmitted by court minstrels of

8. C.M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry* (London 1952), 2ff., 50ff.; N.K. Chadwick, *Russian Heroic Poetry* (Cambridge 1932); eadem, *Oral Epics of Central Asia* (Cambridge 1969).

9. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 94f.

10. On the different identities of Zoroaster's patron Kavi Vištāspa and Darius' father Vištāspa, see E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Greek Texts* (Paris 1929), chapter IV; A. Christensen, *Les Kayanides, Det kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab., Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser* XIX:2 (København 1931), 27–35. On the priestly function of the kavis, see G. Widengren, *Die Religionen Irans* (Stuttgart 1965), 25.

11. Boyce, "Some Remarks on the Transmission," 47; eadem, "Zariadres and Zarer," 474f.

northeast Iran from the Kayanian period.[12] The absorption of the Saka and Parthian legends into the Kayanian cycles has been regarded by that author as a result of a common tradition that was perpetuated in a common milieu.[13] Transpositions of episodes and individuals, and anachronisms or chronological discrepancies found in these legends, were thus the consequence of literary manipulation, and not necessarily evidence of religious rivalry.[14]

In questioning the historicity of the age of the kavis, proponents of comparative mythology have ascribed religious and mythical values to certain legends and figures from the Iranian cycles. In support of a mytho-religious interpretation of some of the Kayanian heroes, Georges Dumézil has stressed the points of resemblance between the latter and mythical figures from religious epics of other Indo-European speaking peoples.[15] Dumézil has stressed four points in his argument. (1) That the feats attributed to the Iranian kavis Usaδan and Haosravah follow a standard formula that was used also for the fabulous Iranian first kings. (2) That

12. Missing details of incidental stories in Old Iranian literature that have entered the *Shāhnāma* and the Pahlavi sources may have been transmitted also through the medium of religious texts that have perished. Conversely, religious hymns in both western and eastern Iran may have occasionally fallen under the influence of court poetry, as suggested by I. Gershevitch, see "Old Iranian Literature," *HO* IV:1, 1968, 25–26.

13. Boyce, "Zariadres and Zarer," 474–475; I. Gershevitch, "Iranian Literatures," *Literatures of the East, an Appreciation* (London: E.B. Ceadel, 1953), 50–73.

14. Boyce, "Some Remarks on the Transmission," 51, n. 1. Thus the substitution in the *Shāhnāma* of the hero Rustam for Garšāsp, the Avestan Krsāspa, has been attributed to religious factors, see F. von Spiegel, *Erānische Alterthumskunde* I (Leipzig 1871, 126; M. Molé, "Garshāsp et les Sagsār," *La nouvelle Clio* 3–4 (1951), 128–138. Sām, who was a double of Krsāspa and the grandfather of Rustam in the *Shāhnāma*, was regarded by Molé (op. cit.) as a link between two different versions of the older Krsāspa legend, see also H.S. Nyberg, "La legende de Keresāspa," *Oriental Studies in Honour of Cursetji Erachji Pavry* (London/Oxford 1933), 336–352; E. Benveniste, L. Renou, *Vṛtra et Vṛθragna, Étude de mythologie Indo-Iranienne, Cahiers de la société asiatique* III (Paris 1934), 66, 79. The Krsāspa legend was seen by Molé as the mythical source also for the two different cycles of adventures that involved the heroes Rustam and Spandiyād or Isfandiyār, op. cit.; cf. J. Marquart, "Beiträge zur Geschichte und Sage von Eran," *ZDMG* 49 (1895), 643ff. Isfandiyār's liberation of his sister from the Brazen Hold was regarded by Molé as a euhemeristic transformation of an ancient eschatological myth, op. cit., 136.

15. Georges Dumézil has provided a summary of the literature *pro* and *contra* the historical validity of the Kayanian period in *Mythe et épopée* II (Paris 1971), 142ff. According to the latter the argument hinges on the point at which authentic Iranian history begins after the inevitable "belles histoires" of the origins. "C'est là, partout," he writes, "qu'une sorte de fatalité oppose aisément les spécialistes et les comparatistes, les premiers plus disposés à faire crédit au textes, à voir dans les scènes les plus fabuleuses des 'événements' réels simplement enjolivés, et les seconds prompts à reconnaître dans les mêmes scènes des thèmes si bien attestés par ailleurs qu'ils pensent pouvoir faire l'économie des événements. L'Iran fournit à ces débats une riche matière." See 143ff. The hypothesis for a

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the kavis are connected with eastern Iran. (3) That the names of at least three kavis have a pre-Zoroastrian form and date. (4) Finally, and most importantly, that the concordance between the name and character of the Iranian Kavi Usan and the Indian mythical Kāvya Uśanas suggest that the Iranian figure, like his Vedic homonym, came from an original body of Indo-European myths.[16] Dumézil's *point d'appui* is the concordance between the names and characters of the Avestan Kavi Usan and the Vedic Uśanas which he attributed neither to chance nor to borrowing.[17] But if the Iranian Kavi Usan originated in the east Iranian world in pre-Zoroastrian times, as Dumézil has rightly assumed, then his association with acts of sorcery and magic would be easily explained as a reflection of the early age of the legend. The Iranian account of Kavi Usan must be attributed then to a more primitive stage in the development of heroic legends when heroes resorted to magic for the realization of their objectives.[18] The character and activity of the Vedic Kāvya Uśanas preserves an impression of this age in the Indian context. Furthermore, the concordance between the names and characters of the Iranian and Vedic figures could be attributed to a process of assimilation in which fact and fiction were combined in the accounts of an ultimately historical personage.

If the continuity of a tradition of vigorous nondidactic and heroic literature from the Kayanian age to the Sasanian period is seen as a reflection of the values of the heroic age in the Iranian world, then one might expect to meet a similar phenomenon in other media of expression within the same cultural milieu. It may be postulated, I believe, that the Sogdian tradition of wall painting offers a rich and graphic

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mytho-religious interpretation of the Iranian legends was first proposed by F. von Spiegel, *Erānische Alterthumskunde* I (Leipzig 1871), 110ff., 724–730; idem, "Awestâ und Shâhnâme," *ZDMG* 45 (1891), 187–203, and by J. Darmesteter, "Le Mahābhārata et le Shāh-nāmah," *Journal asiatique* X (1887), 38–75. This hypothesis was further developed in H. Lommel, "Kāvya Uçan," *Mélanges de linguistique offerts à Charles Bally* (Genève 1939), 209–214; S. Wikander, *Vayu I* (Uppsala/Leipzig 1941); idem, "Sur le fonds commun indo-iranien des épopées de la Perse et de l'Inde," *La nouvelle Clio* 3–4 (1951), 311–329; M. Molé, "L'épopée iranienne après Firdōsī," *La nouvelle Clio* V:7–10 (1953), 377ff.; idem, "Deux notes sur le Rāmāyaṇa," *Collection Latomus* XLV, *Hommage à Georges Dumézil* (Bruxelles 1960), 140–150.

16. Dumézil, *Mythe et épopée* II, 216–217.

17. Christensen who argued for the historical validity of the Kayanian dynasty contemplated the possibility that allusions to the powerful Iranian Kavi Usan might have been introduced into the Ṛgveda, see *Les Kayanides*, 28, n. 2. Dumézil's other objections to the identification of the Iranian Kavi Usan as an historic figure have been answered in Boyce's study of the Kayanian heroic cycle, see Boyce: 1954, 47, passim.

18. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 25.

documentation of the same heroic age that was perpetuated in Transoxiana into the Sasanian period. As a back country where the heroic age flourished after its decline in Persia, Transoxiana would appear then to have developed the pictorial epic as a distinctive regional expression of that age. By far the largest body of the secular murals from Sogdiana depict themes that have a primarily narrative and heroic interest. Such representations are distinguished by formal conventions and iconographic formulae that identify them as illustrations of heroic cycles. Like the secular literature of entertainment, the Sogdian murals were cultivated by professional artists who served the demands and interests of a martial and aristocratic society. Whereas the monumental arts of India and of Sasanian Iran served as instruments of religious or state propaganda, Sogdian art served to entertain a society that cherished the values of the heroic age. It was doubtless the material wealth of Sogdiana and local patronage, rather than any religious or official concern, that assured the maintenance and development of its tradition of secular painting. Chinese sources of the T'ang period clearly attribute the prosperity of the Sogdians to their mercantile activity. "They (the Sogdians) excel in commerce and love profit; from the time a man is twenty years old he goes into neighboring principalities; wherever one can make money they have gone." Again "These people are skillful merchants; when a boy reaches the age of five he is put to studying books; when he begins to understand them, he is sent to study commerce; to make money is considered by most of the inhabitants to be an excellent thing."[19]

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The Origin and Particular Traits of the Continuous Pictorial Epic in Sogdian Painting

The continuous pictorial epic in Sogdian painting refers to the use of a continuous sequence of individual scenes of secular and epic interest, in which identical persons appear in episodes or events separated in time. Since the continuous frieze was not viewed at once, the background even if generalized would appear to change as the viewer moved from one scene to the next. By definition, therefore, the Sogdian continuous pictorial epic is distinguished from the panel compositions of Sasanian art that depict non-narrative and courtly themes.[20] The word "epic" is used

19. J.G. Mahler, *The Westerners among the Figurines of the T'ang Dynasty of China* (Roma: IsMEO, 1959), 69, translation from E. Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux* (Paris 1942), 133–135.

20. See D'iakonov's objections to the use of "pan-Iranist" terminology with reference to the art of Transoxiana, *Zhivopis'*, 157.

according to A. B. Lord's definition which encompasses historical as well as romantic and heroic narratives. However, because of its later date, the romantic narrative category has little relevance for the study of the literature and art of pre-Islamic Transoxiana.[21]

Pictorial narration in Buddhist art and in the Jewish and Christian arts of the Early Christian and Byzantine periods also differs from the Sogdian pictorial epic by virtue of its religious thrust and teleological content. However, Hellenistic and Roman murals and friezes of sculpture that depicted continuous pictorial epics on the exterior or interior faces of walls of buildings antedate the Sogdian pictorial epic.[22] The Hellenistic and Roman continuous pictorial epics that evidently served as models for both Jewish and Early Christian pictorial narratives[23] may also have inspired the early medieval artists of Transoxiana. Graeco-Roman literary themes, depicted both according to the "monoscenic" and the "cyclic" method of rendering literary content, are known from the arts of Bactria and Transoxiana prior to the sixth century.[24] The "cyclic" method, found on the outer side of the Stroganoff silver bowl in the Hermitage Museum, was used to depict scenes from the *Syleus*, a Euripidean satyr play about Heracles. Two contiguous episodes from the same story are there accompanied by a banquet scene which is incongruously inserted into the Heracles legend.[25] The use of at least two separate episodes from the same story on the Stroganoff bowl distinguishes the latter from the two other "Bactrian" vessels that depict contiguous scenes from different Euripidean plays.[26] K. Weitzmann, who attributed the three bowls to Hellenized Oriental workshops of the Kushan and post-Kushan periods, has shown a connection between these bowls and representations of Greek drama and epics on Hellenistic terra-cotta

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21. A. B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass. 1960), 5–6.

22. P. H. von Blanckenhagen, "Narration in Hellenistic and Roman Art," *AJA* 6 (1957), 78–83; K. Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex, a Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton 1970), 123f., 227.

23. K. Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art* (Princeton 1951), 189f.; idem, *Roll and Codex*, 228–229; idem, "The Study of Byzantine Book Illumination, Past, Present, and Future," in *The Place of Book Illumination in Byzantine Art* (Princeton 1975), 51f.

24. For a definition of these terms, see Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, 12f.

25. The Stroganoff bowl was attributed to a Sogdian workshop and dated to A.D. fifth–seventh century, on the basis of style, iconography and epigraphy, by B. Staviskii, "O datirovke i proiskhozhdenii ėrmitazhnoi serebriiani chashi . . .," *SGÉ* XVII (1960), 67–71. The Sogdian inscription on this bowl was read and dated to A.D. seventh–eighth century by V. A. Livshits and V. G. Lukonin, "Srednepersidskie i sogdiiskie nadpisi na serebrianykh sosudakh," *VDI* 3 (1964), 163, 172, no. 20.

26. K. Weitzmann, "Three 'Bactrian' Silver Vessels with Illustrations from Euripides," *Art Bulletin* 25 (1943), 289–324.

Megarian bowls. He derives the development of the expanded narrative cycles from the medium of book painting in Hellenistic papyrus rolls that originated in the later third century B.C.[27] The use of "omission," "condensation" and "conflation" observed in the representations on these bowls and in some monumental works of art in the West are attributed by Weitzmann to the development of pictorial narration in miniature painting.[28] Thus the murals from the Synagogue at Dura Europos which display these particulars are linked to a tradition of Jewish illustrated books.[29]

However, the expanded "cyclic" method of rendering literary content, found on the Megarian bowls, in the toreutic arts and in Early Christian and Byzantine miniatures and their offshoots, must be distinguished from the method of continuous pictorial narration in that class of monumental works of art that had a strictly architectural origin.[30] Sogdian painting, like certain Hellenistic and Roman murals and sculptural friezes, was intimately connected with specific architectural settings.[31] Since Central Asian examples of Graeco-Roman murals with representations of pictorial epics are unknown, the link between Western murals and the Sogdian tradition of painting remains uncertain. Nevertheless, the influence of the Graeco-Roman method of continuous pictorial narration evidenced in the minor arts of the Hellenized Orient at least indirectly links the Western and Sogdian traditions of wall painting. Just as the Buddhist tradition of pictorial narration adapted Graeco-Roman principles for the expression of its specific content, the Sogdian tradition of wall painting evolved its distinctive formal and thematic conventions for the representation of epics of local significance.

As in the oral epic, the quality of the pictorial epic in Sogdian art depended to a large extent on the creator's skill in fashioning descriptions of heroes, horses, arms and encampments. "In them the forward march of the story is halted" while the

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27. Ibid., 289f., idem, *Roll and Codex*, 26f.; 225f.; idem, "Narration in Early Christendom," *AJA* 61 (1957), 85. For fragments of Megarian bowls from Aï Khanum, see D. Schlumberger, P. Bernard, "Aï Khanoum," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* (Paris 1965), 630–31.

28. For a definition of these terms, see Weitzmann, "Narration in Early Christendom," 88–89; idem, *Roll and Codex*, passim.

29. Weitzmann, "Narration in Early Christendom," 88–89; C. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Final Report VIII:1 (New Haven 1956), 392f.

30. This "cyclic" method is found in the small panel compositions sometimes placed along the bottom register of the murals in Sogdian painting.

31. On Neo-Assyrian and Phoenician antecedents of the method of continuous pictorial narration, see H.G. Güterbock, "Narration in Anatolian, Syrian, and Assyrian Art," *AJA* 61 (1957), 62–71.

viewer paused and marveled at the scenes presented.[32] Such descriptive details were ornaments that emphasized either important episodes in a group of themes or the hero in a given story. Details of dress, armor and horse are frequently belabored in scenes that depict a hero about to embark on a special mission.[33] Such elaborations or ornamentations, furthermore, suggest the progress of the action and its culmination. Thus the labors of the Rustam-like hero from *Panjikent VI:41* begin with the hero's duel against a human adversary, and progress to a single-handed combat with a reptilian creature (figs. 42–44, pls. 4–11). They culminate in the hero's entanglement with an army of goat-footed demons (pl. 11). The stories behind other Sogdian examples of the pictorial epic, though frequently unknown to us, appear to follow the progress of the action or drama which unfolds in a seemingly orderly fashion.

The themes adopted by the painter of the pictorial epic are as predictable as the stylistic formulae used for their expression (see chapter 4). Scenes of battle and banquet (*razm u bazm*) represent the most recurrent themes in the Sogdian pictorial epic. The journey to fulfill a mission, the mission fulfilled, the preparation for battle, the conflict with natural or unnatural antagonists, and the ceremonial or casual banquet comprise, in large, the thematic repertory of the Sogdian pictorial epic. The consistent juxtaposition of certain themes, furthermore, suggests a dependence on stories which followed specific formal and thematic patterns. Despite the dearth of evidence about the existence of a Sogdian tradition of oral epic literature, the patterns displayed by the story content of the Sogdian pictorial epic testify to the existence of such a literature.

In his description of vivid action, the Sogdian painter of the pictorial epic, like the oral poet, aimed for clarity of expression. He achieved this aim by a selective use of a few compositional devices, and by treating a single mood or effect. Since interest centered on the performance of the protagonists, he concentrated on the development of a consistent language of gesture and proportion. Details of dress, weapons and ornament were elaborated at the expense of background or landscape references. The mood of the narrative was established by emphasis on the essentials of the story. Thus battle scenes are composed of a few stock schemes that gain narrative value and vitality by the dramatization of critical moments in the conflict.

32. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 86.

33. The presence of elaboration at this point and in connection with a particular hero was seen by Lord as a possible survival from rites of initiation or dedication, ibid., 88–89.

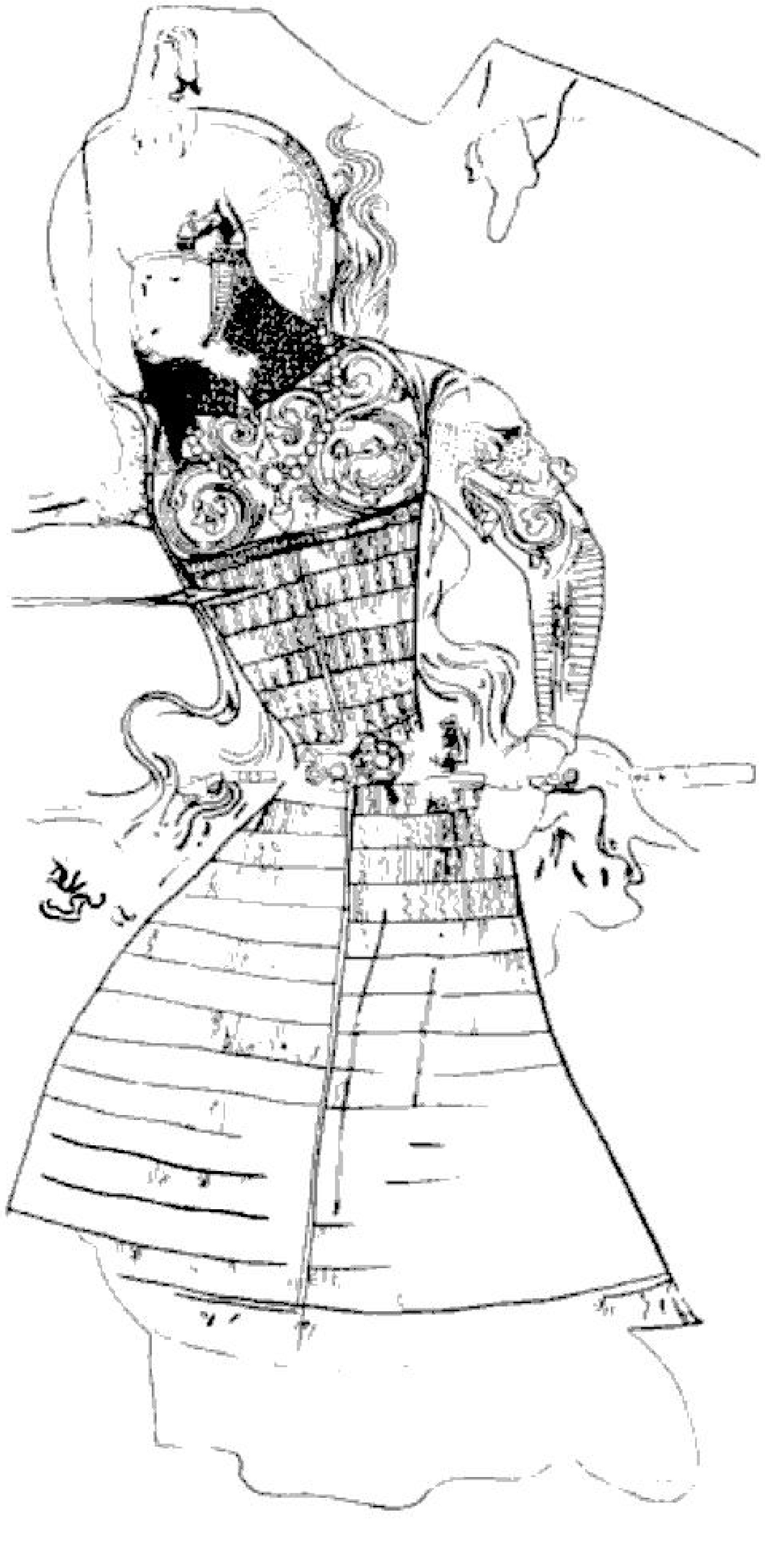

Figure 45. Sogdian mural depicting a warrior in heavy armor engaged in single combat, from Panjikent VI: 55. *Sketch after Belenitski, Marshak, in* Arts Asiatiques *XXIII, 1971, fig. 11.*

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Figure 46. Sogdian mural depicting a female warrior engaged in single combat, from Panjikent VI:55. *Sketch after Belenitski, Marshak, in* Arts Asiatiques *XXIII, 1971, fig. 12.*

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The first stage of an equestrian battle from *Panjikent VI:41* is dramatized by the opposition of serried horses, poised on collision course, in the center of the composition. The desperate eye movements of the horses (pl. 4) and their vivid and contrasting colors convey the immediacy of a real contest by a few simple artistic devices.

Elsewhere the excitement of a pitched battle is communicated by an emphasis on troop movements and martial details. In the treatment of war casualties, for example, the artist enlivens the scene by his commentary on the grimacing and contorted facial expressions of the wounded that contrast with the standard expressionless features of the active participants in the battle (cf. *Panjikent XXI:1*) (pls. 14–20). In the single combat, on the other hand, emphasis on the eloquent gestures, accoutrements and personal qualities of the antagonists establishes the heroic mood and pace of the duel (cf. *Panjkent VI:55*) (figs. 45–46).

The Iconography of Heroized and Legendary Figures

With the exception of the "Rustam cycle," depicted in the murals from *Panjikent VI:41*, and the Ḍaḥḥāk story from *Panjikent I* (north wing of *eivān*, fig. 33), the content of the innumerable heroic epics depicted in Sogdian painting remains tantalizingly elusive. Despite attempted identifications,[34] these paintings remain silent testimony to a vast body of secular and heroic literature of entertainment that circulated among the Sogdians in pre-Islamic times. The local significance of these legends is suggested by their novelty and complexity. Connections between the names of known heroes and legends familiar from the Iranian epics are indeed lacking in the one instance where a Sogdian inscription offers positive identification of the heroes and their plight in a mural from Panjikent (*Panjikent XXII, principal hall, walls flanking altar*, fig. 60). Nevertheless, the heroic tone and secular interest of this mural are conveyed by its style and the content of its inscription.

34. A.M. Belenitsky, "Ancient Pictorial and Plastic Arts and the Shāh-Nāma," Belenitskii: 1973, *Trudy dvatsat' pyatogo mezhdunarodnogo kongressa vostokovedov* III (Moskva 1963), 96–101; A fragmentary mural, recently excavated at Panjikent, with the representation of a man shown with a pair of snakes on his shoulders, has been tentatively identified as a reference to the tyrant Ḍaḥḥāk of the Iranian epic, see A. Belenitskii, B. Marshak, "Nastennye rospisi, otkrytie v Pendzhikente v 1971 gody," *SGE* XXXVII (1973), 56, fig. 4. Negmatov has argued persuasively for the identification of the narrative frieze depicting a she-wolf suckling two infants, from the residence at Qal'a-i Qahqaha I:11, at Ustrushana, as a reference to the legend of Romulus and Remus, see *SA* 3 (1974), 183–292, fig. 15.

Legendary figures and heroized individuals are frequently identified in the Sogdian murals by means of specific marks, attributes or associations that distinguish them from heroes of popular themes and from living individuals of historic documentaries. Similar means mark the superior gifts of heroic individuals in heroic poetry. These individuals possess in rich abundance qualities which other men may possess to a lesser degree. Heroic figures are frequently identified from the start as extraordinary beings whose physical development and characteristics are not those of other men.[35] Such heroes are enveloped in a "splendor" that irradiates them even in the hour of failure or death, and enjoy the favor of divinities that originally endowed them with their superior gifts. Gods are occasionally involved in the hero's action and take sides in the hero's struggles.[36] Such notions are translated in graphic terms in the Sogdian murals where the concepts of heroic "splendor," divine blessing and superior physical endowments are represented according to specific iconographic formulae.[37] The "Rustam cycle" from *Panjikent VI:41*, on account of its positive identification with a heroic cycle, may be examined for expressions of such notions.

A half-concealed female figure, depicted behind an ambiguously shaped precipice (pl. 6), in an episode from the "Rustam cycle" may be identified as an allusion either to a supportive divinity or to a personage that figured in the Sogdian "Rustam" story. The identification of the figure as a divinity is only possible if we interpret the ambiguous precipice as a reference to cloud formations in the celestial regions. But the same formula was used for the representation of rocky cliffs (pls. 9–10). The heroic, or possibly divine, stature of the half-concealed figure is suggested by her association with a small foliate-skirted figure that flies towards her with a necklace. Such foliate-skirted female figures, shown also holding wreaths in connection with a wrestling match in another Sogdian mural (*Panjikent XVII:14*), find their closest parallels in the art of Khotan, where they have been tentatively identified as representations of Dṛḍhā Pṛthivi, an earth goddess rarely mentioned in Buddhist literature.[38] The honorific function of this motif in Sogdian

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35. On the qualities of the hero in heroic poetry, see Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 91ff.

36. Ibid., 68ff., 86.

37. G. Azarpay, "Some Iranian Iconographic Formulae in Sogdian Painting," *Iranica Antiqua* XI (1976), 168–177.

38. M. A. Stein, *Ancient Khotan* (Oxford 1907), pls. XLIII, XLV; N. V. D'iakonova, S. S. Sorokin, *Khotanskie drevnosti, terrakota i shtuk* (Leningrad 1960), 39, pls. 8–9; J. Williams, "The Iconography of Khotanese Painting," *East and West* 23:1–2 (1973), 135–136. The functions of these figures in Sogdian painting compare to those of the Indian suparṇas, garūḍas, gandharvas and apsarases, see

Figure 47. Detail of a battle scene from a Sogdian mural from Panjikent XXIV. *Sketch after Belenitskii, Marshak, in* SGÈ *XXXVI, 1973, 63.*

painting is suggested by differences in the functions of the beneficiaries of this genius.

The moral tone of the Rustam story, or its mood, is reinforced by the artist's ornamentation of details that are incidental to the main course of action. The half-concealed female figure behind the hero of the "Rustam cycle" is counterbalanced by the remorseful figure of the hero's goat-footed adversary, perched on a rocky prominence (pls. 9–10). Thus by counterbalancing the positive and negative associations of the protagonists the artist establishes a framework in which the outcome of the action may be anticipated by the viewer.

The notion of the hero's superior and divinely endowed gifts is graphically represented in a number of ways. In the "Rustam cycle" the hero is usually followed by a small winged and beribboned creature that flutters towards the

M. Bussagli, C. Sivaramamurti, *5000 Years of the Art of India* (New York, n.d.), figs. 76, 222; M. Hallade, *Gandharan Art of North India and the Graeco-Buddhist Tradition in India, Persia and Central Asia* (New York 1968), pls. 34, 55, 99. Floriate human forms apparently had a strictly ornamental function in the late Antique and Byzantine tradition of the Mediterranean world, cf. A. Grabar, *Byzantium from the Death of Theodosius to the Rise of Islam* (London 1966), 117, fig. 127.

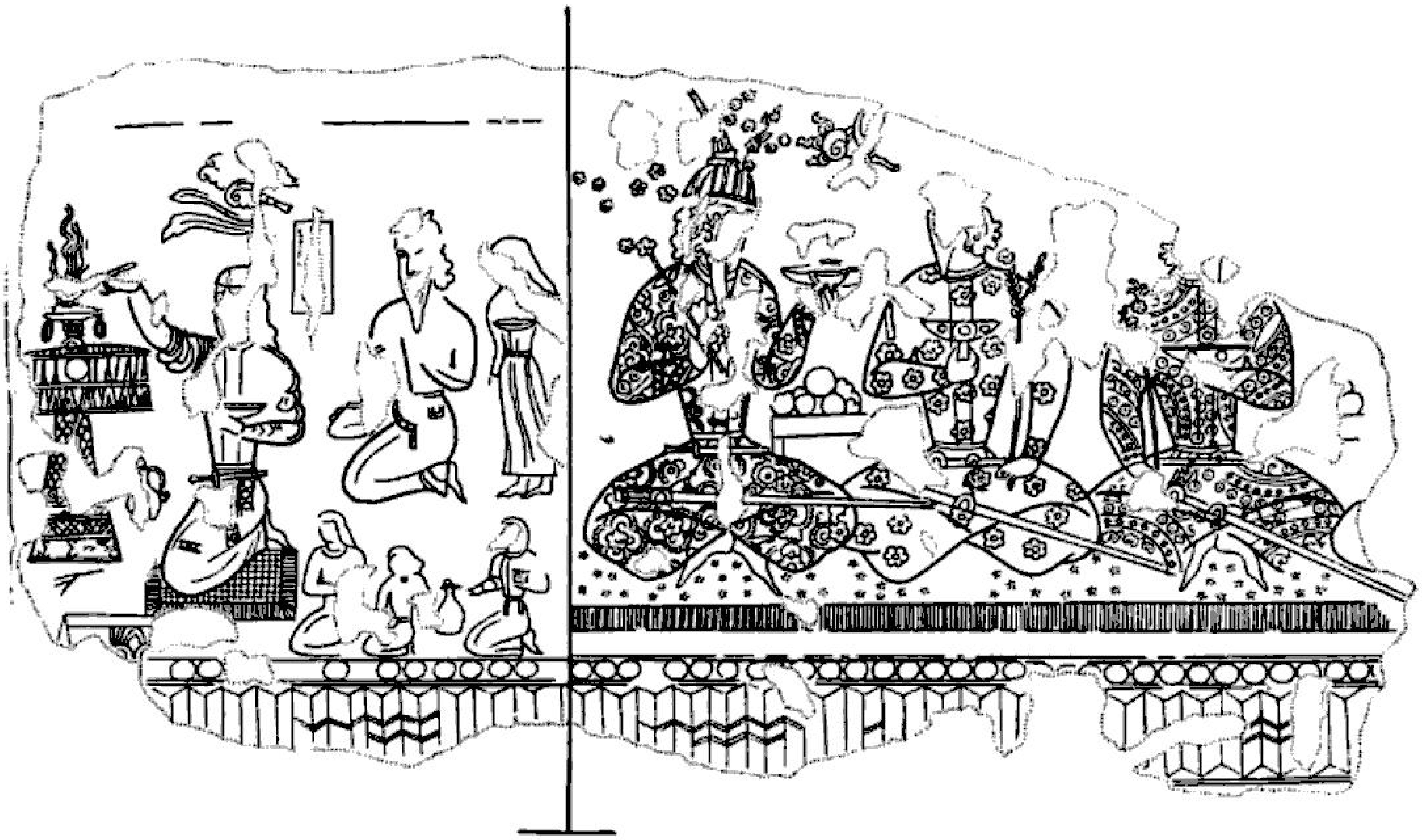

Figure 48. Scenes of sacrifice at a fire altar and banquet from a Sogdian mural from Panjikent I:10. *Sketch after* Zhivopis', *pl. VII.*

hero's head (pls. 6, 9). Other composite beings, birds and animals serve a similar function in a large number of heroic representations in Sogdian paintings from Varakhsha, Samarkand and Panjikent. The aerial movement of these creatures is stressed by the indication of fluttering ribbons tied to their forelegs or fastened to a ring held in the beak or mouth (figs. 47–48).

Great variation may be observed in the anatomical configuration of such animals that range from the realistic bird and bovine to fantastic combinations of several different animal species.[39] The composite creature that hovers towards the hero's head in the "Rustam cycle" is a lion-bird, in which a lion's head is combined with

39. Azarpay, in *Iranica Antiqua* XI (1976), 168–177.

the wings of a bird and a fish tail. Despite their anatomical variations all these creatures serve the same function in Sogdian iconography.[40] They are shown in flight towards heroic figures in moments of conflict, at banquets and during the performance of religious ceremonies before fire altars. Such beings are not purely ornamental motifs and differ in function from the honorific half-human torso on a foliate skirt, for which there existed Indian antecedents in the art of Eastern Turkestan. In the light of Parthian and Hephthalite parallels for the ring-bearing bird, the *sēnmurv*, and an animal-framed nimbus, I identified the Sogdian flying creature as a graphic reference to the Iranian concept of *hvarnah*. The association of animal forms with *hvarnah* in the sense of royal fortune follows a familiar Old Iranian pattern frequently noted for the Persian context. In the Persian context *hvarnah* conveyed the notion of fortune that was transmitted not only by one king to another but it became the lot of particularly worthy individuals and even of a whole nation.

In Persian sources *hvarnah* is sometimes found in compound with *duš-*, meaning "bad" or "evil," and in this compound it was interpreted by H.W. Bailey in the sense of "having received bad fortune."[41] This term appears as an epithet of such negative concepts and beings as *Aēšma* "fury" and *Añra Mainyu* "the evil spirit." The opposition of fortune and doom implied by *hvarnah* and its antithesis in the Persian sources finds a graphic counterpart in the symbols attached to the figure of the hero and his adversaries in the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent. Whereas the hero's success is there guaranteed and his superior gifts acknowledged by the flight of the beribboned lion-bird towards him, his furious subhuman adversaries are accompanied by a vulture that serves as an omen of their impending doom (pl. 11).

Yet another manifestation of *hvarnah* that found expression in the representational arts of Persia and Central Asia was the luminous brilliance that irradiated certain individuals and gods. Whereas the rayed aureola or flame halo was there reserved primarily for solar and flame deities (cf. the god with a torch from *Panjikent II:B*)[42] (fig. 49), the nimbus or disc halo was the usual attribute of other

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40. Ibid.

41. H.W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth Century Books*, 2d ed. (Oxford 1972), 3, 48–49, 61.

42. A. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* (Copenhague 1936), 157, figs. 6:d, 28; J. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1967), pls. III:51, 56, 58, IV:61, V:84, 90. The mysterious ASHAEIXSHO of the Kushan coins is shown with a radiate halo, see W.B. Henning, "A Sogdian God," *BSOAS* XXVIII:2 (1965), 252–253.

Figure 49. God with a rayed halo and torch depicted in the mourning scene, in the Sogdian mural from the tetrastyle hall of Temple II, *at Panjikent*, Panjikent II:V. *Copy after* Zhivopis', *pl. XXIII (see fig. 56, 57).*

radiant and lustrous beings[43] (fig. 45). Haloed individuals in Kushan art were frequently depicted also with head and shoulder flames that occasionally distinguish flame deities in Persian art.[44] Unlike the cautious and selective use of light symbolism in Sasanian representations, Buddhist art of the post-Kushan age

43. G. Azarpay, "Crowns and Some Royal Insignia in Early Iran," *Iranica Antiqua* IX (1972), 113ff.

44. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, fig. 6:d; Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, 200–201.

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perpetuated the usage of the head and shoulder flames in Central and East Asia.[45]

A distinction between the world of actuality and that of legend and religion is suggested by subtle differences in the forms of light symbolism in Sogdian painting. Whereas the simple halo often distinguishes figures of historic and popular interest (cf. fig. 55), additional head and shoulder flames are there the attributes of legendary and epic heroes (fig. 45). Divinities frequently possess, in addition to the nimbus and shoulder flames, flaming mandorlas that serve to further remove them from secular imagery[46] (figs. 5, 8, 13, 58). The exclusive use of head and shoulder flames for epic heroes and divinities in Sogdian painting anticipates the usage of the flame halo limited to representations of saintly individuals. The devaluation of the plain halo in Islamic art, where it becomes a commonplace and ornamental motif, is perhaps another reflection of its earlier honorific and secular usage in Iranian and Byzantine art.[47] But expressions of light symbolism were not limited to religious expressions in Islamic times.[48] They were further elaborated also in the later heroic poetry of Western and Central Asia, as exemplified in the Georgian poet's eulogy

45. A.C. Soper, "Aspects of Light Symbolism in Gandharan Sculpture," *Artibus Asiae* XII:3 (1949), 269ff., n. 42; P. Granoff, "Tobatsu Bishamon: Three Japanese Statues in the United States and an Outline of the Rise of This Cult in East Asia," *East and West* 20:1 (1970), 144ff., figs. 5–6, 9, 17–25.

46. The *halo* in Sogdian painting is depicted as a plain disc (*Panjikent VI:1*, harpist), with multiple rims (*Panjikent I:10*, north wall, lower layer), or with a fluted interior (*Panjikent I:5, VI:13*). Although the floriate Indian haloes are absent in the repertory from Panjikent, the Sogdian types find parallels in Indian and Central Asia art, cf. G. Yazdani, *Ajanta* IV (London/New York/Bombay 1955), Caves IX and XVII, pl. XXXVIII. The fluted conch that frames the heads of saints in Byzantine art is based on an architectural feature that is unrelated to the fluted haloes of Indian and Central Asian type, see J. Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, Pelican history of art (London 1970), fig. 117; D.V. Ainalov, *The Hellenistic Origin of Byzantine Art* (New Jersey 1961), 104–105, 164, 207. The rimmed halo may be ornamented with a pearl border (cf. *Panjikent VI:55*) and surrounded by flames (*Panjikent VI:55*). In this form, it may be described as *a flame halo*, which is limited to representations of gods and legendary and heroic figures (cf. *Panjikent VI:26, south wall; I:5; VI:13; II:5–6, niche in north wall; VI: niche; XXII: niche*). The light which appears to radiate from the shoulders of these individuals is depicted as smoldering tongues of flames that envelop the halo totally or in part.

47. E. Kühnel, *Die Miniaturmalerei im islamischen Orient* (Berlin 1923), 9; R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (Cleveland: Edition d'Art Albert Skira, 1962), 83 (nimbus as a ubiquitous motif); Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (Cleveland: Edition d'Art Albert Skira, 1962), 79, 105–106, 162.

48. On the survival of the concept of *hvarnah* in Islam, see H. Corbin, *Les motifs zoroastriens dans la philosophie de Sohrawardî, Shaykh-ol-Ishrāq (ob. 587/1191)* (Teheran 1946); idem, *Terre céleste et corps de résurrection de l'Iran mazdéen à l'Iran shî'ite* (Corrêa 1960), passim; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Values in Zoroastrianism, Their Survival and Renewal* (New York and Evanston 1970), 157–162.

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of his heroine Nestan-Darejan. "Once on a very dark night," wrote Rustaveli, "we saw a radiant light, in the middle of a meadow. . . . Awed we approached the light and formed a circle around it. And to our wonder we saw a sun-faced rider before us. We gazed at the brilliant face flashing lightning around. And like the sun it scattered glistening beams about it."[49]

As a conclusion to the foregoing study of the manifestations of *hvarnah* in Sogdian painting it is proposed that the Old Iranian notion of *hvarnah*, which survived as *farn* (*prn*) in Sogdian Buddhist sources, was perpetuated in the native Sogdian religious beliefs in early medieval times.[50] However, Sogdian and other Central Asian expressions of Old Iranian concepts were shaped by internal developments and external factors that were often at variance with those that affected the expressions of Sasanian Persia. It is noteworthy that despite regional differences, the manifestations of *hvarnah* preserved their significance in secular and heroic legends, as well as in the religious beliefs of Persia and Sogdiana in the early Middle Ages.[51]

The Warrior-Woman

The position of women in Sogdian society corresponded closely to the status of women in other societies of the heroic age in its mature or "aristocratic" stage. In these societies women retained relics of the old prophetic grandeur accorded them by nomadic societies in the "primitive" stage of the heroic age. They functioned both as mistresses of domestic life and as active participants in the affairs of their world.[52] Like other women of heroic and "aristocratic" societies who fought like men when their honor or kin were at stake, Sogdian women were sometimes cast as warriors who engaged in single duels or in general melees alongside the men. Such warrior-women are represented in a number of narrative friezes from Panjikent.

Women participate in single combat with male adversaries in the murals from *Panjikent VI:55, south wall* (fig. 46) and the *southeast wall* (unpublished). The raised

49. Shota Rustaveli, *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, transl. by V. Urushadze (Tbilisi 1968), 172–173.

50. H.W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth Century Books*, 54ff.

51. Azarpay, "Crowns and Some Royal Insignia in Early Iran," *Iranica Antiqua* IX (1972), 113ff.; eadem, "Some Iconographic Formulae in Sogdian Painting," *Iranica Antiqua* X (1973), 168–177.

52. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 489ff. But women did not enjoy the same high social status in all nomadic Central Asian societies, cf. the position of women in Kazakh culture, T.G. Winner, *The Oral Art and Literature of the Kazakhs of Russian Central Asia* (Durham, N.C. 1956), 13–15.

sword, dramatic posture and heroic stature (2.5 m high) of the woman warrior on the south wall of *Panjikent VI:55* portray her as no less formidable than her male adversary. The involvement of women in general warfare is the theme of the main narrative frieze from *Panjikent XXI:1* which constitutes a sequence of battle scenes that culminate in the death of the principal female protagonist (pls. 14–20). In his discussion of this "amazonomachy" Belenitskii recalled references to the high status generally enjoyed by women in Transoxiana in early medieval times.[53] It may be noted, moreover, that the respect accorded to women in Sogdian society corresponded with the general attitude towards women found in the "aristocractic" stage of heroic societies, and that their role was different from that of women in the "primitive" and "proletariat" societies. Women in Sogdian society were not pictured as sorceresses of primitive and pastoral societies, nor were they the wise and cautious wives and mothers of the "proletariat" stage of the heroic tradition. They personified rather the ideals of the heroic world as it really was, and not as it was seen through distant memories and distorting changes. They lack the strange powers of the Russian *polenitsy*, such as those of the giantess Nastasya who married the man she subdued in battle after she had seized him by the curls and dropped him in her leather pouch.[54]

Warrior-women in Sogdian painting, like their male counterparts, convey the ideas of heroic worth that were current in Sogdian society as a whole. These were the ideals of a homogeneous society where the cultivated elite and the masses shared common interests and a common outlook.

Historic Documentaries, Genre and Folktale

The formula of the continuous narrative frieze that characterizes the representation of the heroic epic is also present in representations of historical documentaries such as the arrival of foreign missions at the Samarkand court, depicted in *Room 1* of the aristocratic or royal residence excavated at Samarkand in 1966 (pls. 21–22, figs. 50–52). However, the narratives depicted on the side walls are here different from those depicted on the end walls. The pomp and pageantry of court life in the Sogdian capital at the height of its power and splendor are conveyed through a clear progression of action, formulaic gestures and proportions, the use of brilliant and vivid colors, and descriptive details. According to the interpretation proposed

53. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta.*
54. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, 483.

for the reception scene by A.M. Belenitskii and B.I. Marshak, *Part One*, pp. 61–64, an enthroned Sogdian god was depicted in the center of the west wall facing the entrance. Next to the god stood the ruler of Samarkand, Vargoman, who headed the procession[55] (fig. 51). The emphasis on accurate details even in the representation of differences in the physiognomies of the participants has relevance for the representation of historic documentaries. The same concern for realistic detail and accuracy characterizes the representation of the Arab siege of a Sogdian city and other murals uncovered in the royal residence at the Panjikent citadel (figs. 28–31, pls. 23–24). The siege instrument depicted in this mural is a ballista which hurled projectiles through the torsion of ropes, apparently the Arab *manjanīq*.[56] The refined miniaturistic style, monochromatic palette and use of plastic modeling found in these and other fragments of murals from the Panjikent citadel were doubtless designed to meet a similar demand for accurate and realistic detail.

In Sogdian painting the expression of heroic worth by tokens of splendor and external dignity was not limited to representations of heroic epics. Such formulae are also attached to representations of daily events such as banquet scenes and scenes of ritual sacrifice. The brilliantly colored fabrics, and rich and detailed references to weapons, ornaments and utensils celebrate the dignity of such commonplace events (cf. *Panjikent XXIV*). Thus, the flight of the composite and beribboned being towards the heads of the banqueters (*Panjikent XXIV*, fig. 17) confers upon a ceremonial and secular scene the dignity accorded royal images (*Panjikent VI:1*, fig. 53) and officiants at the fire altar (*Panjikent I:10, north wall*, fig. 48, *Varakhsha 6, south wall*).

If the preferential treatment given to the representation of heroic and epic themes in Sogdian painting indicates the relative importance of such themes in the

55. Cf. On the relationship between historic and heroic patterns in epic narrative, see A.B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass. 1960), 6. The following kings of Samarkand are known to have borne the title *Ikhshid*, ruler of Sogdiana:

A.D.	640–660	Šišpir (*šyšpyr*)
		Vargoman (*βrγwm'n*)
	680–700	Tukaspadak (*twk'sp'd'k*)
		Nanišiš (*nnyšyš*)
	700–720	Tarxun (*trγwn*)
	720–738	Gurak (*'wyrk*)
		Dēwaštič (*δyw'štyč*)
From 738		Turgar (*twry'r*)

See O.I. Smirnova, *Ocherki iz istorii Sogda* (Moskva 1970), 275f.

56. For a description of such siege instruments, see J. Parry, "Warfare," *The Cambridge History of Islam* II (Cambridge 1970), 831.

Figure 50. Female participants in a procession of Chaghanian emissaries to the Sogdian royal court at Samarkand. Samarkand, Room 1. Reconstructed sketch after Al'baum, Zhivopis' Afrasiaba, *fig. 10.*

Sogdian tradition, the abundance and variety of the representations of scenes of daily life and folklore indicate the currency of the latter as a less serious literary form in the Sogdian cultural milieu. Like the folktales of other peoples, Sogdian tales reflect a more pedestrian tone and life-style than that pictured in heroic legends. The characters of folktales emerge as personifications of their functions

Figure 51. Detail of a Sogdian mural from the west wall of Room 1, at Samarkand. Inscription identifies the figure with cap as Vargoman, ruler of Samarkand, mid seventh century. Copy.

or of special circumstances in the story. Such stories frequently have a miraculous twist and moralizing overtones.[57]

The abbreviated and conflated representations of folktales in Sogdian painting follow distinctive compositional and stylistic standards that are at variance with those found in the representations of the historic and heroic cycles (see above, pp. 70, 95f., 116f. pls. 10, 12, 13, 25, figs. 54, 55).

57. W.B. Henning, "Sogdian Tales," *BSOAS* XI:3 (1945), 465–487; Chadwick, *The Heroic Age*, 110ff., 113.

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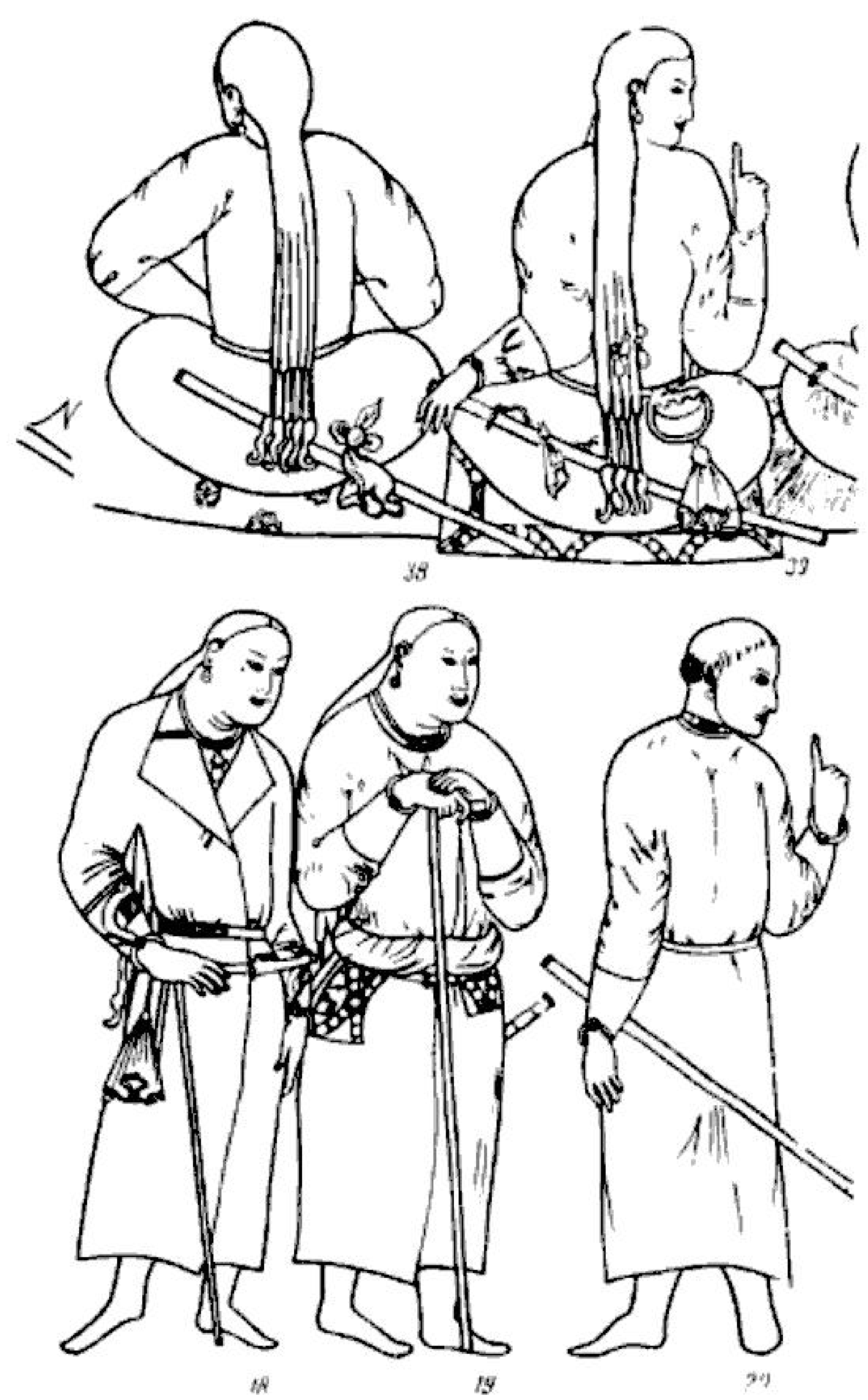

Figure 52. Representation of a delegation of Turks among the foreign missions at the Sogdian court at Samarkand. Sogdian mural from the west wall of Room 1, Samarkand. Reconstructed sketch after Al'baum, Zhivopis' Afrasiaba, *fig. 7.*

Military Equipment

The accurate and detailed depiction of weaponry in the Sogdian murals offers valuable material for the study of Sogdian military tactics in pre-Islamic times.

Figure 53. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting a royal banquet, from Panjikent VI:1. *Sketch after* Zhivopis', *pl. XXXVI.*

V.I. Raspopova has attributed the difference between the military equipment of the nomadic Turks and that of the Sogdians to basic differences in the military tactics employed by the two communities. The lighter weapons characteristic of Turkish and other nomadic equestrian warriors were apparently designed to meet the need for mobility in warfare. Unlike nomadic warriors who fought singly and relied on their speed and shooting skill, Sogdian horsemen (pls. 4, 5) fought in close formation and relied on the impact of their heavily armored lancers at close range. The preponderant Sogdian offensive force consisted of mounted lancers who carried battle banners in addition to lances. The Sogdian war-horse was equipped with stirrups, frequently a metal cavesson or *psalion* resembling a muzzle, and a curb-bit of the "severe" or "rough" type (pls. 4, 26) similar to that utilized by heavy cavalry in Iran in Parthian and Sasanian times.[58] The Turks and

58. V.I. Raspopova, "Sogdiiskii gorod i kochevaia step' v VII–VIII vv.," *Kratkie soobshcheniia* 122, Arkheologicheskoe izuchenie Srednei Azii (AN SSSR Ordena trudovogo krasnogo znameni Instituta arkheologii, Moskva 1970), 86–91; Otto Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1973), 201ff. The distinction drawn by Xenophon between the "flexible"

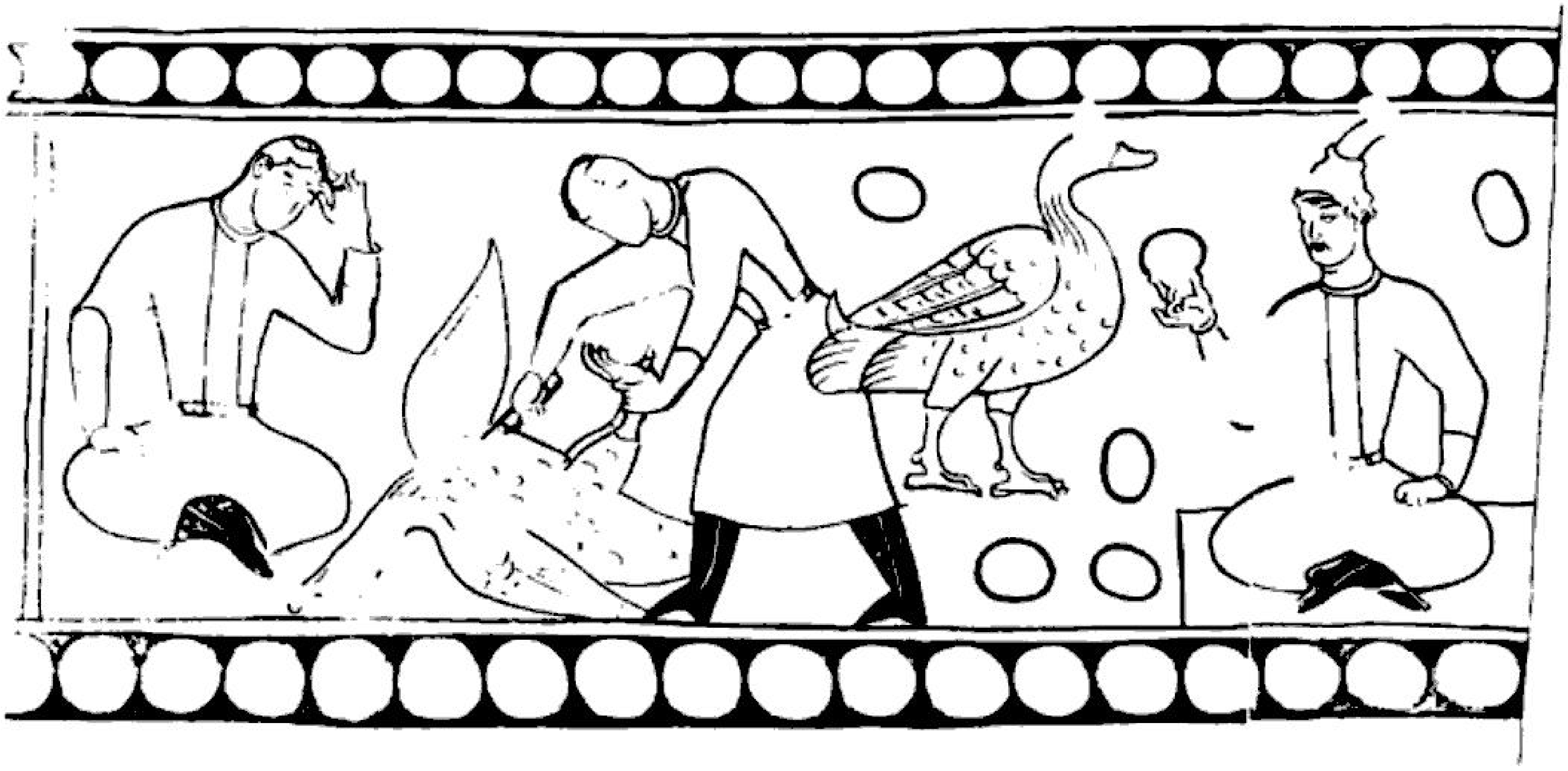

Figure 54a. Sogdian mural depicting the tale of the slaughter of the goose that laid golden eggs, from Panjikent XX : 1. *Sketch after Belenitski, Marshak, in* Arts Asiatiques *XXIII, 1971, fig. 14.*

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other equestrian nomads utilized the stirrup, but they lacked the "rough" curb-bit of the Sogdian and Persian type. Turks and other nomadic warriors of the sixth and seventh centuries were dressed in long protective coats of lamellar or chain mail. They wore helmets with cheek-pieces and carried a small round shield suspended from a long loop across the shoulder. They wore two belts; on one were diagonally suspended a bow carried in a long narrow bow-case and a quiver filled with arrows placed in an upward position. From the second belt were suspended a sword or saber and a dagger. The lance and axe were also sometimes found among the equipment of the equestrian nomadic warrior.[59] The mail-clad equestrian royal portrait from Taq-i-Bustan shows that the Turkish armor of the

and "rough" bit is discussed by J. K. Anderson, *Ancient Greek Horsemanship* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1961), 175. The cavesson which has Sasanian and Roman antecedents was evidently first used in the Hellenistic period, see Anderson, op. cit., 60. The cavesson from Sultantepe, discussed by Anderson, probably dates from the Hellenistic period.

59. Maenchen-Helfen, op. cit., 231ff., 438ff.

sixth and seventh centuries was adopted almost in its entirety by the later Sasanians in Iran.

The early Sogdian terra-cottas and murals, datable to the late fifth and sixth centuries (cf. *Panjikent: Temple II* and its precincts, figs. 23–24), depict a type of military equipment that is characteristic for Persia in the early Sasanian period. This equipment comprised a short coat of mail, occasionally leggings, a belt around the waist, and sword belt about the hips from which a sword and a quiver were suspended vertically. The replacement of early Sasanian types of military equipment by types that were current among the Eurasian equestrian nomads appears for the first time in Sogdian murals of the sixth to the seventh century (cf. *Panjikent I:10*, fig. 48). Some of the new weapon types, represented in the Panjikent paintings cited above and in the Balalyk-tepe murals (fig. 40), apparently

Figure 54b. Sogdian mural depicting the tale of the clever hare and the lion, from Panjikent XXI:1. *Sketch after Belenitski, Marshak, in* Arts Asiatiques *XXIII, 1971, fig. 15.*

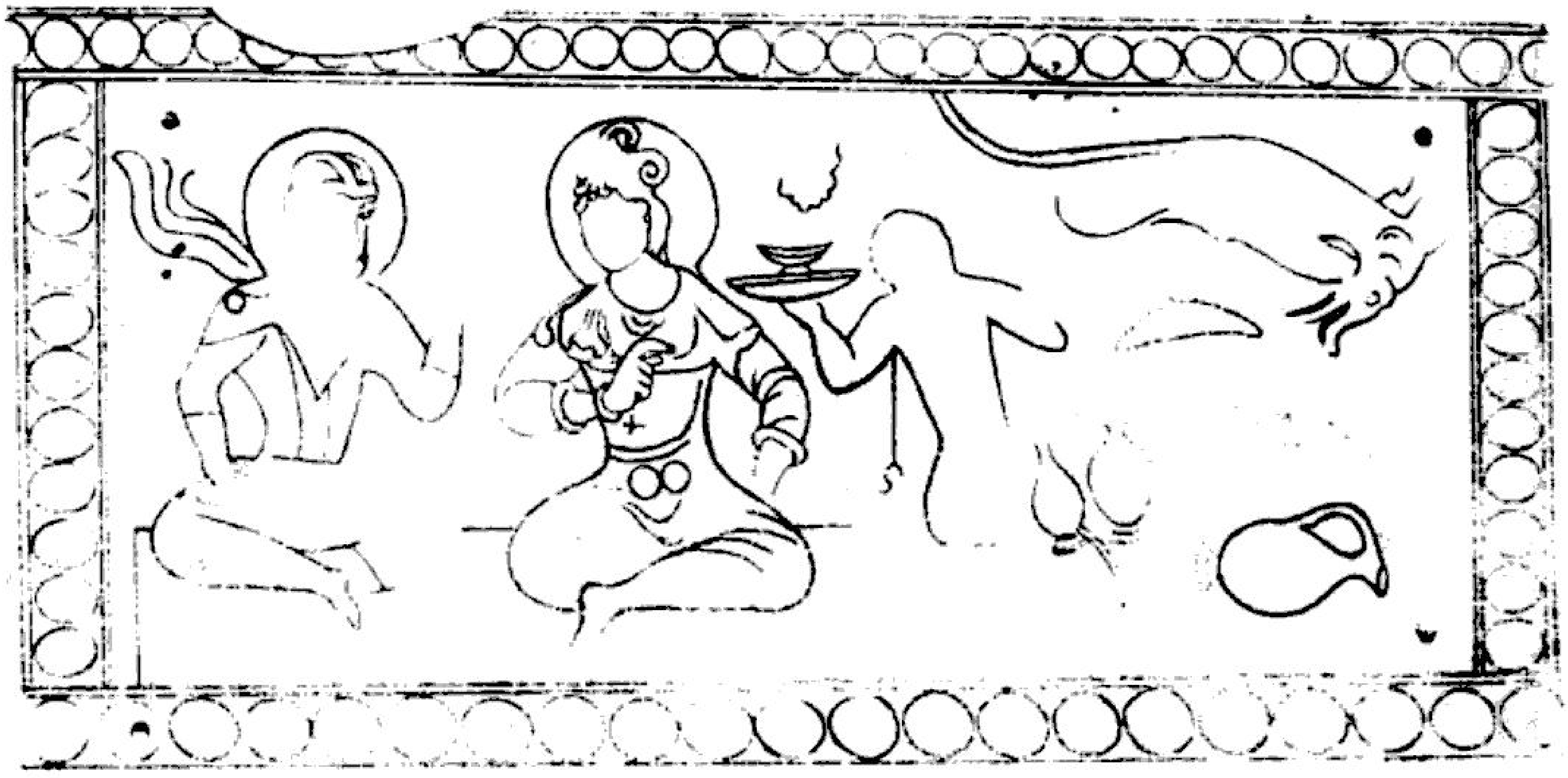

Figure 55. Representation of an unknown fable in a Sogdian mural from Panjikent VI:41. *Sketch after Belenitskii, in* Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane v 1956 godu, *fig. 15.*

underwent further transformation in Sogdiana.[60] The mid-seventh century murals from Afrasiab (figs. 50–51) testify to the introduction of the stirrup and compartmentalized belts with multiple plaques into Sogdiana. The vertically suspended sword, sword belt, and curved dagger, however, preserve archaic features that disappear from Sogdian military equipment in the later seventh and eighth centuries. Thus the later murals from Panjikent and Varakhsha show the full-scale use of the Turkish-type armor as well as certain modified or additional features. Sogdian horsemen were more heavily equipped than the Turks. Their protective coat of lamellar or chain mail, which had a tighter weave and extended below the knees, was a prized item that was occasionally dispatched to the Chinese court.[61] Engraved leather was sometimes used to cover the shoulders and chest of the coat

60. K. Otto-Dorn, "Türkisch-islamisches Bildgut in den Figurenreliefs von Achthamar," *Anatolia* VI (1961–62), 9ff.

61. Chavannes, *Documents*, 136; Mahler, *The Westerners*, 54.

of mail, and fitted and jointed chain mail protected the hands and feet of the warrior (fig. 45, pls. 14, 18, 20, 26). Sogdian helmets, like many European types, were constructed upon a metal framework, and were frequently equipped with cheek- and nosepieces (pls. 4, 18), or with a chain net suspended from the rim of the helmet over the face. They used distinctive swords that were long and pointed, and carried a second quiver with a broad upper rim and arrows placed downward.

Thus while the heavier and more elaborate armor of the Sogdian equestrian warrior was designed to offer him protection against the archer's arrow, the "severe" curb-bit and stirrups of his horse ensured him greater control and leverage in offensive warfare fought in close formation. The Arab warriors who subsequently adopted the military equipment of the Persians and Sogdians also utilized the two belts, bow, bow-case and quiver of the later Sogdian type; their horses were likewise equipped with stirrups and the curb-bit of the "severe" type.[62] The evolution of the dress and equipment of Arab warriors thus suggests that they combined the tactics of the nomadic warrior with modes of warfare that were characteristic of Byzantium, Persia and Sogdiana.[63]

62. Raspopova, op. cit.; R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, 37.
63. Parry, "Warfare," op. cit, 833ff.

3. The Theme: Religious Imagery

Most of our information on the native Sogdian religion prior to the Muslim conquest of Transoxiana has come from written sources rather than from archaeological evidence. Thus it was on the basis of written evidence that the majority of the native Sogdian divinities were assumed to be Iranian concepts.[1] This assumption now finds support in the Sogdian representational arts, primarily in the form of wall painting. The divinities depicted in the murals from *Temples I* and *II* at Panjikent, and on the east wall of the "small" hall in the Sogdian palace at Shahristan, Ustrushana, are not of Buddhist, Manichaean or Christian origin, but represent the native Sogdian pantheon that included a large number of Iranian divinities.[2]

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The Sogdian idol was housed in a tetrastyle temple (fig. 11), with four free-standing columns, flat or lantern roof, colonnaded portico and axial sanctuary. The plan and elevation of the Sogdian tetrastyle hall find antecedents in the early Zoroastrian sanctuaries, first attested in a temple of the fourth century B.C. at Susa.[3] Subsequent temples built for divine beings, and for the cult of the ever-burning

1. W.B. Henning, "A Sogdian God," *BSOAS* XXVIII:2 (1965), 242–254. Pre-Zoroastrian are concepts such as "spirit of Earth" (Manichaean *Z'yy spnd'rmt*, "Genius of the Earth," termed simply as "earth" in a Buddhist fragment), *Aša vahišta*, preserved as the Manichaean element "light" (*'rtxwšt*). Baga as an individual god, or the appellative *baga-* "god," and the Daēvas also belong to this category. Whereas the use of *δyw* in the sense of "god" in the onomastica of certain Sogdian regions indicates the retention of the pre-Zoroastrian meaning, its use in the sense of "demon" in Sogdian texts is indicative of the influence of Zoroastrian teaching. The Iranian divine beings known in Sogdiana were: Ahura-mazdāh, Zrvān, Miθra, Nana(i) the Lady, Vərəθrayna, Naryasaŋha, Māh, Aši-vaŋuhi, Druvāspa, Haoma, X^varənah, Tištriya, Yima, "righteous wind" (*vātahe ašaonō*), and Gandarva. On *rywxš* (*Rēwaxš*?) and *Taxsīč*, see Henning, op. cit., 252–253.

2. Belenitskii, who had proposed a Manichaean origin for the two temples at Panjikent, gave a Manichaean interpretation for some of the iconographic formulae in the murals from these temples, see *Zhivopis'*, 64ff. A.IU. IAkubovskii, on the other hand, explained the same formulae as expressions of the native Mazdaean religion of Sogdiana, see *Zhivopis'*, 21ff.

3. K. Schippmann, *Die iranischen Feuerheiligtümer, Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* XXXI (Berlin/New York 1971), 266–274.

Figure 56. Sogdian mural depicting a scene of mourning from the south wall of the tetrastyle hall of Temple II. *Panjikent. Sketch after* Zhivopis', *pl. XIX (see figs. 49, 57).*

fire, in Iran in Seleucid and Parthian times, evidently followed the plan of the Achaemenid temple at Susa which underwent structural changes in the Sasanian period. The Sasanian square domed temple with four arches, described as a *gumbad* in Zoroastrian writings, now known as *čahār tāq*, developed out of the tetrastyle temple of the Parthian period in Iran proper.[4] But the essential features

4. Ibid.; M. Boyce, "On the Zoroastrian Temple Cult of Fire," *JAOS* 95:3 (1975), 456f., 464f.

Figure 57. The heads of the deceased and a mourner, from a detail of the mourning scene, from the south wall of the tetrastyle hall of Temple II, *Panjikent. Copy after* Zhivopis', *pl. XXI (see figs. 49, 56).*

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of the earlier Persian tetrastyle temple were preserved in the Sogdian *fayn*, or tetrastyle temple, throughout the pre-Islamic period.[5]

The Ancestral Cult

The murals from *Temple II*, and possibly those from the first temple at Panjikent, constitute themes that apparently pertained to a funerary cult that was linked to the royal house at Panjikent. The focal point of the cycle is a mourning scene repre-

5. M. Boyce, "Iconoclasm among the Zoroastrians," *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults, Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty* IV (Leiden 1975), 99; R. Ghirshman, *Terrasses sacrées de Bard-é Néchandeh et Masjid-i Solaiman* I, *Mémoires de la Délegation archéologique en Iran* XLV (Paris 1976), 184f.

sented as a large composition along the entire face of the south wall of the principal tetrastyle hall of the Temple II complex (figs. 49, 56, 57). This mural depicts the funeral bier of a youthful crowned personage, whose death is mourned by both mortals and gods. The deceased was tentatively identified by the excavators as the Iranian epic hero Siyāvush, who was the reputed founder of the Sogdian city of Bukhara. According to Narshakhī, Siyāvush, son of the Iranian king Kaikāūs, fled from his father to Transoxiana where he took refuge with the Turanian king Afrāsiyāb.

> Afrāsiyāb treated him kindly and gave him his daughter for a wife. Some have said he gave him all of his domain. Siyāvush wanted to leave some memorial of himself in this district which had been given in loan to him. So he built the citadel of Bukhara and usually resided there. But when he and Afrāsiyāb became estranged Afrāsiyāb killed him. He was buried in a place (located) as you come from the Eastern gate inside the gate of the straw-sellers, which is called the gate of the Ghūriyān. The magians of Bukhara for that reason esteem this place. Every year before the rising of the sun, on New Year's day, every person (brings) a cock there and kills it (in memory) of him. The people of Bukhara have lamentations concerning the killing of Siyāvush which are known all over.[6]

According to the belabored later accounts of the Siyāvush legend, the hero was denied the customary funeral after his execution. In Firdausi's account Siyāvush predicts the manner of his own death:

> They will strike off this guiltless head of mine,
> And lay my diadem in my heart's blood.
> For me no bier, shroud, grave, or weeping people,
> But like a stranger I shall lie in dust,
> A trunk beheaded by the scimitar.[7]

As the central figure in the cult of death and resurrection, Siyāvush was thus remembered by annual sacrifices and lamentations sung by the magians of Buk-

6. See Narshakhi's account, transl. by R.N. Frye, *The History of Bukhara* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1954), 23, 19. For a discussion of this identification, first proposed by A.IU. IAkubovskii and A.I. Terenozhkin, see *Zhivopis' drevnego Piandzhikenta, Soobshcheniia tadzh. FAN SSSR* II (1949), 15; M.M. D'iakonov, "Obraz Siiavusha v Sredneaziatskoi mifologii," *KSIIMK* XL (1951), 34–44.

7. A.G. Warner, E. Warner, *The Sháhnáma of Firdausí* II (London 1906), 311. Besides the references to Siyāvush in the Avesta and the Pahlavi texts, the legend of Siyāvush is preserved in numerous Muslim sources, cf. 'Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Tha'ālibī, *Shāhnāmeh-i-Tha'ālibī dar sharh-i- aḥvāl-i-salatīn-i-Irān*, transl. by M. Hedayat (Teheran 1949), 82ff.; Abū Jafar Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk* II, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden 1879), 597–602, 604–618; Abū al-Husayn 'Alī ibn al-Husayn al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa ma'ādin al-jawhar* I (Cairo 1303/1885–6), 97–98; Mahmūd b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kashgarī, *Divanü lügat it-türk* III, ed. B. Atalay (Ankara 1941), 149–151. I wish to thank Frank Vittor for drawing my attention to some of the above references.

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hara, called *kīn i Siyāvush*, "The revenge for Siyāvush." But later, the principal figure in the mourning scene from Panjikent was identified by N.V. D'iakonova and O.I. Smirnova as the son of Siyāvush, Furōd, an account of whose death is preserved in the Persian epic the *Shāhnāma*.[8] In Firdausi's account Furōd is a Turanian champion whose citadel was stormed by Iranian troops who wounded him in hand-to-hand combat. While his mother and attendants rent their tresses and destroyed their valuables, the mortally wounded hero was laid on an ivory throne. Later in anticipation of the surrender of the castle to the Iranians, Furōd's mother stabbed herself to death over the body of her son.

The mourning scene from Panjikent has none of the colorful details of the dramas that led to the early deaths of Siyāvush and his son Furōd. The ritual depicted in this composition appears rather as a reference to what must have been the customary funerary practice in Sogdiana.[9] The appearance of the same ritual of mourning on painted ossuaries from Khwarezm testifies to the currency of similar practices among other Iranian peoples in Transoxiana in early medieval times.[10] Explicit demonstrations of mourning, prohibited by the Zoroastrian

8. N.V. D'iakonova, O.I. Smirnova, "K vosprosu ob istolkovanii pendzhikentskoĭ rospisi," *Issledovaniia po istorii kul'tury narodov Vostoka, Sbornik v chest' akademika I.A. Orbeli*, Akademiia Nauk SSSR, Otdelenie istoricheskikh nauk (Moskva/Leningrad 1960), 167–184.

9. In Firdausi's account Furōd's weeping mother, Jarīra, and attendants laid the mortally wounded hero on an ivory throne and then rent their tresses in sorrow. In anticipation of the imminent surrender of Furōd's castle to the Iranian troops, the hero's mother then destroyed the valuable horses in the castle stables and stabbed herself to death over her son's body. Furōd's death was subsequently mourned by the Turanians and by Furōd's Iranian kinsmen who had taken part in the siege of Furōd's castle, see *The Epic of Kings*, translated by Reuben Levy (London 1967), 117–118, D. Monchi-Zadeh, *Topographische-historische Studien zum iranischen Nationalepos*, *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 41:2 (Wiesbaden 1975), 191. Tolstov identified the deceased in the mourning scene in the Panjikent mural as a woman. This identification was made on the basis of the presence of women's names on inscribed Khwarezmian ossuaries, of the seventh and eighth centuries, from Tok Kala. Some of the ossuaries bore painted representations of mourning scenes comparable to that shown in the Panjikent mural. However, the royal crown worn by the deceased in the Sogdian mural and the association of that mural with cult practices would argue for the identification of the deceased in the Panjikent mural as male. See S.P. Tolstov, V.A. Livshitz, "Decipherment and Interpretation of the Khwarezmian Inscriptions from Tok Kala," *Acta Antiqua Scientiarum Hungaricae* XX:1–2 (Budapest 1964), 232.

10. G. Azarpay, "Iranian Divinities in Sogdian Painting," *Acta Iranica, Monumentum H.S. Nyberg* I (Leiden 1975), 21, fig. 4. On these parallels, see also K. Jettmar, "Zur 'Beweinungsszene' aus Pendžikent," *Central Asiatic Journal* VI:4 (1961), 265–266. A.V. Gudkova, *Tok-kala, Karakalpakskii filial Akademii nauk UzSSR* (Tashkent 1964), figs. 277ff.; IU.A. Rapoport, *Iz istorii religii drevnego Khorezma, (ossuarii)*, *TKhAĖĖ* VI (1971), 102ff.; V.N. IAgodin, T. Khodzhaiov, *Nekropol' drevnego Mizdakhkana*, Akademiia nauk Uzbekskoi SSR, Karakalpakskii filial AN UzSSR, Institut istorii, iazyka i literatury im. N. Davkaraeva (Tashkent 1970), plates facing pp. 112, 120.

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church, were here combined with the Zoroastrian-type burial in ossuaries.[11] This mixture of pre-Zoroastrian and Zoroastrian practices in Transoxiana is reflected also in Sogdian religious concepts of this time.

The funerary ritual as it is depicted in the Panjikent mural and on the ossuaries was associated, according to Chinese written sources, with the Sogdian version of the cult of Adonis. This cult involved a ritual in which the goddess Nanā, the Lady, was believed to have joined the mortals in their annual mourning for the dead god.[12] Muslim written references to cult practices at Bukhara suggest the synthesis of the Sogdian version of the Adonis cult and a native ancestral cult ultimately based on the dynastic cults of the earlier Graeco-Iranian states.[13] The central figure in the cult of resurrection at Bukhara was identified with Siyāvush, the alleged founder of that city, whose burial place became the cult center of the magians of Bukhara.[14] As a messianic figure, Siyāvush undoubtedly provided a prototype for some of the heroes of later Iranian apocalyptic literature, but was he also regarded as the ancestor of all the royal houses of Sogdiana?[15] Attempts to link the name of Siyāvush with *chao wu*, given in Chinese sources as the name of

11. E. Chavannes, *Les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux* (Paris 1942), 132–133, n. 5; cf. also the funeral of Furōd in Firdausi, noted above. A.IU. IAkubovskii gave a Zoroastrian interpretation to the scene to the right of the central group of mourners in the mural from the second temple at Panjikent, which he described as an illustration of the fall of sinners from the činvād bridge, see *Drevnii Piandzhikent, po sledam drevnikh kul'tur* (Moskva 1951), 256. The falling figures in the Panjikent mural, however, are surrounded by fragments of the falling wall and bricks from the ramparts ot the citadel. The vertical red line that zigzags down the middle of the structure is probably not intended to represent a bridge at all, but a flash of lightning or an earth tremor, presumably brought about by the divinities represented in the upper left corner of the scene. But the same ritual was also practiced in connection with cremation type burials, as shown by its representation on a vessel, presumably an ash urn, from Merv, see G.A. Koshelenko, "Unikal'naia vaza iz Merva," *VDI* 1 (1966), 92–105.

12. Henning, "A Sogdian God," op. cit., 252, n. 67; Chavannes, *Les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux*, 132–133, n. 5. Cf. the Anatolian myth, noted by Arnobius, which gave the name of Nanā to the daughter of the river Sangarios, mother of Attis. But as Cumont noted, this Phrygian Nanā was apparently not associated there with a cult, see F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922–1923)*, *Bibliothèque archéologique et historique* IX (Paris 1926), 196, n. 5.

13. Azarpay, "Iranian Divinities in Sogdian Painting," op. cit., 20, n. 4.

14. See the account of the history of Bukhara by Narshakhī, in R.N. Frye, *The History of Bukhara*, 23, nn. 82ff., 110. Belenitskii associated the mourning scene from Panjikent with a cult in which the Siyāvush legend was syncretized with astral notions found in Manichaean circles, see *Zhivopis'*, 80–81.

15. H. Corbin, *Terre céleste et corps de résurrection de l'Iran mazdéen à l'Iran shī'ite* (Corrêa 1960), 97, 121.

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the Sogdian ruling family, remain inconclusive.[16] But it has become clear that this dead hero from the Panjikent mural, who was a mortal of royal rank, was the necessary center of a regional funerary cult. The princes of Kushāniyah (presumably midway between Samarkand and Bukhara), who paid daily homage at a local pavilion decorated with painted images of the kings of the four quarters, doubtless revered an ancestral figure associated with their own native dynasty.[17] The Zoroastrian *fravaši* cult, suggested by ancestral images fashioned to honor the souls of the dead in Parthian Iran, evidently found a hospitable medium for its development in Sogdiana.[18]

The religious significance of the funerary ritual in the Panjikent mural, suggested by its context, is also implied by the participation of gods in this otherwise ordinary mourning ritual. Three figures in a group to the right of the funeral bier may be identified as gods because of their relatively large proportions and attributes. The iconography of at least two of these identifies them as members of the Iranian pantheon.[19] One is a four-armed goddess, represented as standing closest to the group of mortals; the other is the bent figure of a youthful male god with a flaming torch (fig. 49).

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The Goddess Nanā

Although the attributes of the four-armed goddess are not preserved in the mural from the second temple at Panjikent (fig. 56), her identification as Nanā is suggested by the specific association of that goddess with the funerary cult recorded in the written sources.[20] Other mural representations of this goddess, known from the

16. Chavannes, *Les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux*, 136 n., 243, 288 n., 312; J. Markwart, *Wehrot und Arang, Untersuchungen zur mythischen und geschichtlichen Landeskunde von Ostiran* (Leiden 1938), 150, n. 2. R.N. Frye, "Ṭarxūn-Türxün and Central Asian History," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 14:1–2 (1951), 127.

17. Chavannes, *Les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux*, 145.

18. M. Boyce, "Iconoclasm among the Zoroastrians," *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults, Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty* IV (Leiden 1975), 102f.; eadem, "On the Zoroastrian Temple Cult of Fire," *JAOS* 95:3 (1975), 460.

19. The three other gods represented to the left of the funeral bier (unpublished) apparently continued the funerary theme along the south wall of the main hall of *Temple II*. If the four-armed divinity in this unpublished group is a repetition of the four-armed goddess on the right side of the bier, then the scenes represented to the left of the bier refer to a later episode from the same narrative sequence.

20. See above, n. 12, G. Azarpay, "Nanā, the Sumero-Akkadian Goddess of Transoxiana," *JAOS* 96:4 (1976), 536–542. The foundation of a temple of Nanā at Samarkand is attributed to Alexander in a Syriac version of the Alexander Romance, based on a Pahlavi original of the Sasanian period, see J. A. Boyle, "Alexander and the Turks," *Tractata Altaica* (Wiesbaden 1976), 108.

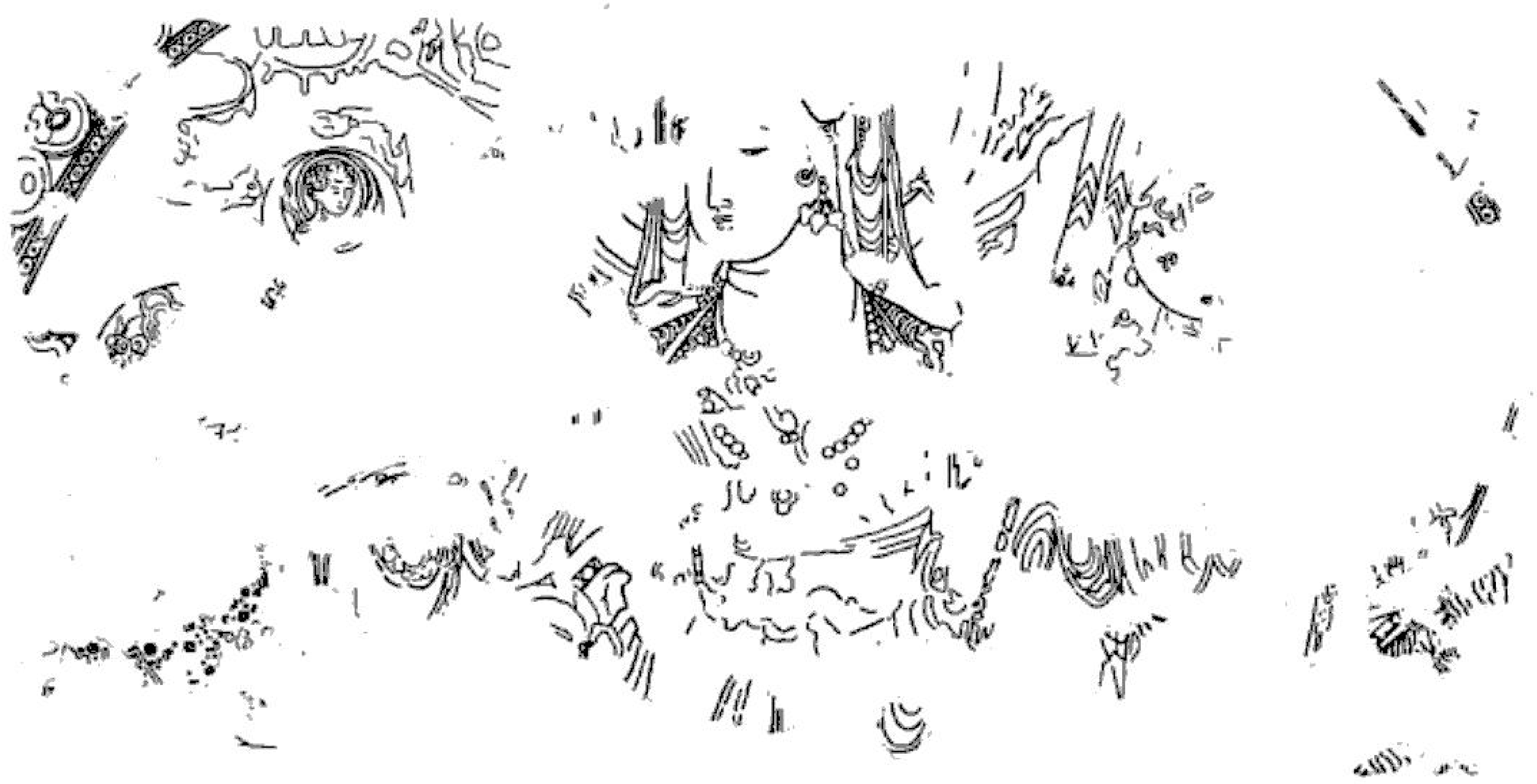

Figure 58. A four-armed goddess depicted in a Sogdian mural from the south wall of a vaulted room from Panjikent VI:26. *Sketch after Belenitskii,* Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta, *26.*

south wall of *Panjikent VI:26* (fig. 58) and two images from the "small" hall at Shahristān, Ustrushana, show her seated on a lion throne or astride a lion, with symbols of the sun and the moon held in two of her four hands.[21] Representations of a four-armed goddess with similar attributes on Khwarezmian silver dishes suggest the currency of her worship in Transoxiana as a whole.[22] The discovery

21. A cup and a scepter are usually held in the other two hands of the same goddess, cf. the representations of the goddess on silver dishes, see below n. 22, and wood carvings, A.M. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, Pamiatniki drevnego iskusstva (Moskva 1973).

22. The four-armed female divinity on the Khwarezmian dishes was identified earlier by S.P. Tolstov as a local version of the Iranian goddess Anāhitā, see *Drevnei Khorezm, Opyt istoriko-arkheologicheskogo issledovaniia* (Moskva 1948), 198, 200; G. Azarpay, "Nine Inscribed Choresmian Bowls," *Artibus Asiae* XXXI:2/3 (1969), 186ff. OXSHO was identified by Belenitskii (*Zhivopis'*, 69–70), with the "Bag-Ā̊rd" of "Ā̊rd-Vakhsh" mentioned in a Manichaean Persian text from

and publication of Sogdian coins bearing the name of Nanā, and Sogdian Nanaeophorous names, further support the identification of Nanā as a major goddess of Sogdiana in pre-Islamic times.[23] The forerunner of the Sogdian goddess was the Kushan NANA whose image and symbols appear on Kushan coins of the second to the fourth centuries. The latter was in turn similar to the Mesopotamian Nanai, the Lady, who was the iconographic prototype for several female divinities of the Indo-Iranian pantheon.[24] Thus the Iranian Anāhitā, who was ultimately a river goddess, later assumed some of the functions and manifestations of the Mesopotamian Nanā.[25]

The ancient Mesopotamian Nanaia, whose cult is first noted in the Ur III period, from the first combined qualities of Inanna with those of Ishtar. The lion vehicle of Ishtar, which was assumed by Nanaia, survived as an attribute of the latter into the early Sasanian period in Western Asia.[26] In an Old Babylonian

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Chinese Turkestan, see W. Henning, "Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan II," *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse* (Berlin 1933), 303–305, 361. On this identification see also M. Bussagli, "Cusanica et Serica II," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* XXXVI:1(Roma 1961), 94ff., n. 5. But on the difference beween OXSHO and ARDOXSHO, see W.H. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books*, Ratanbai Katrak Lectures (Oxford 1943), 65f. On the connection between this goddess and Khotanese representations of a similar goddess see N.V. D'iakonova, "Materialy po kul'tovoi ikonografii Tsentral'noi Azii do musul'manskogo perioda," *Kul'tura i iskusstvo narodov Vostoka 6, TGÉ* V (1961), 257–272. This author points to connections between the local non-Buddhist religions of Khotan and Sogdiana in which she sees the following similarities: (1) A chthonic cult associated with the ancestors of the ruling dynasty; (2) the occurrence of a pair of divinities at the head of the pantheon.

23. O.I. Smirnova, *Katalog monet s gorodishcha Pendzhikent* (Moskva 1963), nos. 356–363; W.B. Henning, *Sogdica* (London 1940), 7; idem, "A Sogdian God," *BSOAS* XXVIII:2 (1965), 252; D. Weber, "Zur sogdischen Personennamen," *Indogermanische Forschungen* 77, Heft 2/3 (1972), 198–199. I wish to thank Professor Martin Schwartz for drawing my attention to the last reference.

24. Azarpay, "Nanā, the Sumero-Akkadian Goddess of Transoxiana," op. cit., 536–542.

25. The goddess with a lute and a lion vehicle is tentatively identified as Sarasvatī, see A. Foucher, "L'Art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra II," *L'École française d'Extrême-Orient* VI:1 (Paris 1918), 66ff., fig. 340; J.N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography* (Calcutta 1956), 376ff.; Gray, *The Foundations of Iranian Religions*, 55ff.; S. Wikander, *Feuerpriester in Kleinasien und Iran, Acta reg. societatis humaniorum litterarum Lundensis* XL (Lund 1946), 113ff.

26. For a review of the literature on the motif of the goddess with a lion vehicle, see H. Mobius, "Die Göttin mit dem Löwen," *Festschrift für Wilhelm Eilers* (Wiesbaden 1967), 449–468. H. Ingholt, *Parthian Sculpture from Hatra, Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* XII (New Haven 1954), 12ff., 23, fig. 5, pls. IV:1–3, 5, IV:2 (lion throne). The animal thrones and vehicles of the goddess survive in Transoxiana, Bactria, and India into the early medieval period, see B.I. Marshak, "Otchet o rabotakh na ob"ekte XII," *TTAÉ, MIA* 124 (1964), 237–240, fig. 26:9 (see also 240, n. 57, on similar terra-cottas from other Sogdian sites); B.IA. Staviskii, *Mezhdu Pamiron i Kaspiem (Sredniaia Aziia v drevnosti), Akademiia nauk SSSR* (Moskva 1966), 94–95 (tentative reconstruction of the layout of the murals from *Panjikent VI:1*).

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hymn Nanaia's father An is said to have elevated her to the position of a supreme goddess.[27]

A Sumero-Akkadian hymn of the Late Assyrian period gives a description of the goddess under her different names, in various cities and temples, and the names of her different husbands in that period.[28] Nanā's attributes, noted in that hymn, were those of Ištar, daughter of the moon god Sin and sister of the sun god Šamaš. Her manifestations ranged from a bearded Ištar in Babylon to a goddess with heavy breasts in Daduni.

In the Hellenistic period Nanā was frequently assimilated with the Greek Artemis in Mesopotamia. A temple of Artemis-Nanaia was built in the middle of the city of Dura Europos in Roman times where a dedicatory inscription identified Nanaia as the chief goddess of that city.[29] Images of Aphrodite, winged victory, and Tyche or Fortuna which were erected in the temple of Nanaia at Dura indicate that the celestial Mesopotamian Nanaia combined the functions of all those Graeco-Roman divinities.[30] A mold-made bust of Nanaia depicted inside a lead patera found in her sanctuary at Dura, and dated to the second or third century, shows her with a bejeweled crown and encircled by a laurel wreath that identify her as a goddess of fecundity and war.[31] The cult of Nanaia which was widespread in the Euphrates Valley in Hellenistic and Roman times[32] apparently survived there as late as the seventh century.[33]

At Susa, where the cult of Nanā had been introduced from Mesopotamia in the third millennium B.C., Nanā's worship continued into the Seleucid age when the

27. D.O. Edzard, "Mesopotamien, Die Mythologie der Sumerer und Akkader," *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* I:1, *Vorderer Orient*, ed. H.W. Haussig (Stuttgart 1962), 108.

28. E. Reiner, "A Sumero-Akkadian Hymn to Nanā," *JNES* 3 (1975), 221–236; 223, notes the *limmu* year for Text C, as 744 or 734 B.C.

29. F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922–1923), Bibliothèque archéologique et historique* IX (Paris 1926), 196ff.; P. Koschaker, "Ausgrabungen in Dura-Europos," *OLZ* XXXIII:3 (1930), 166–168.

30. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, op. cit., 198–199.

31. Ibid., 206ff., pl. LXXXV:1. The patera, which measures 8 cm in diameter, was discovered in the "chapel of Aphrodite" in the Artemis-Nanaia sanctuary at Dura.

32. J.G. Février, *La religion des Palmyréniens* (Paris 1931), 99–102; K. Tallquist, *Akkadische Götterepitheta, Studia Orientalia* VII (1938), 385–386. On references to Nanai, the Lady, in inscriptions from Assur, see J.T. Milik, *Dédicaces faites par des dieux (Palmyre, Hatra, Tyr) et des thiases sémitiques à l'époque romaine, Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique* XCII (Paris 1972), 148, 347. I wish to thank Professor Marvin Pope for drawing my attention to the above references.

33. Nanā was invoked as late as A.D. 600 in an incantation text from Nippur, see J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (Philadelphia 1913), 238.

goddess was named as the principal deity of that city.[34] However, despite her importance among the native population of Susa, Nanaia is not named on Seleucid coins from Susa.[35] Whereas Greek gods occupied an exclusive position in the official cult of the Seleucids, oriental divinities with whom they were assimilated at an early date reappeared in the official pantheon of the city of Susa in the Parthian period. Thus Nanaia's astral aspect and her function as a city goddess were assumed by Artemis with whom Nanaia was assimilated at Susa in the Parthian period. The rayed halo and polos crown of Artemis represented on coins of Mithradates II, issued around 110 B.C. at Susa, thus transferred Nanaia's functions to the syncretic cult of Artemis-Nanaia.[36] An image of Artemis in Greek dress, depicted on a tessera from Palmyra, actually identifies the Greek huntress goddess as Nanaia (NNY).[37]

Bronze coins of the kings of Elymais, probably issued at Susa after the establishment of Parthian rule at Elymais and at Susa, depict Artemis-Nanaia as a frontal or profile head with a radiate halo or polos, or as a complete figure dressed in the fashion of a Greek huntress with or without the radiate halo, and occasionally with a crescent by her side.[38] Nanaia was frequently depicted in her oriental aspect without reference to her assimilation with Artemis in representations of the second century and later, as evidenced by the inscribed stone image of the goddess from Hatra in the Baghdad museum.[39]

The symbols and attributes of the early medieval Sogdian and Khwarezmian images of Nanā, though influenced by Indian formal models, indicate that the

34. For a detailed analysis of the iconography of Artemis-Nanaia at Susa and Elymais, see G. Le Rider, *Suse sous les Séleucides et les Parthes, Mémoires de la Mission archéologique en Iran* XXXVIII (Paris 1965), 292ff.

35. Ibid., 294.

36. Ibid., 296, no. 129. The radiate halo appears about the same time on the coins of Hyspaosines of Characene, ibid., no. 409.

37. H. Ingholt et al., *Recueil des tessères de Palmyre, Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique* LVIII (Paris 1955), 40, no. 285.

38. Le Rider, *Suse sous les Séleucides et les Parthes*, op. cit., pls. 75:15–17, 20–21, 23–24, 36; 74:4–6 (head of Artemis-Nanaia); 73:26–27, 30–35, 37; 74:1, 7–9 (the complete figure of Artemis-Nanaia), see p. 428.

39. S. Fukai, "The Artifacts of Hatra and Parthian Art," *East and West* VIII (1960), 164, fig. 24. Nanaia's image also occurs on a pithos from Assur datable to the second to third century A.D., see H. Ingholt, *Parthian Sculpture from Hatra, Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* XII (New Haven 1954), 12ff., fig. 5. A radiate and enthroned image of Nanaia is depicted on the stone relief of Kamnaskires Orodos of Elymais, at Tang-i-Sarvak, datable to ca. A.D. 100, see W. B. Henning, "The Monuments and Inscriptions of Tank-i-Sarvak," *Asia Major* II:2 (1952), 151–158, pls. II–III.

goddess preserved both her early Mesopotamian affiliations with the sun and the moon, and her identity as a love and war deity. The question now at issue is why the Mesopotamian Nanā was accorded the position of a superlative creative power in an otherwise predominantly Iranian pantheon.[40] I postulate that in early medieval Transoxiana, as in the ancient Near East, Nanā's cult was a syncretic one, and that her qualities were there combined with those of a local Iranian goddess. But since Iranian pictorial models were lacking, the Mesopotamian Nanā's iconography, modified by Indian and Central Asian patterns, prevailed in the imagery of the syncretized cult image.

Nanā's Iranian counterpart was the goddess Ārmaiti, the Avestan Spenta Ārmaiti, who was assigned superlative creative power in the pre-Zoroastrian Iranian pantheon. In this pantheon, Ārmaiti, as earth, formed a pair with the sky god Ahura. But following the elevation of the latter to the rank of supreme god in the Zoroastrian theology, Ārmaiti's position declined to that of the daughter of the sky god.[41]

Whereas the earliest Avestan hymns, the Gāthās, invoke Spenta Ārmaiti as an abstract concept meaning "rightful thought," both post-Gāthic Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian Iranian sources refer to Ārmaiti in the sense of "earth."[42] Pahlavi sources which identify Ārmaiti as earth describe her as mother of mankind, creator of cattle, and genius of cultivated land.[43] As earth, Ārmaiti was also responsible for the spirits of regions, frontiers, stations, settlements and districts, and saw to their proper government and administration.[44] Ārmaiti is occasionally invested with chthonic qualities, as shown by Ahura Mazdā's judgment that the uncharitable tiller of the earth would "fall down into the darkness of Spenta Ārmaiti, down into the world of woe, the dismal realm, down into the house of

40. Henning, "A Sogdian God," op. cit., 242–254; Azarpay, "Iranian Divinities in Sogdian Painting," op. cit.

41. Gray, *The Foundations of Iranian Religions*, op. cit., 47ff.; E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Greek Texts* (Paris 1929), 63ff.; H. W. Bailey, *Indo-Scythian Studies, Khotanese Texts* IV (Cambridge 1961), 12; idem, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books* (Oxford 1943), 52; idem, "Saka śśandrāmata," *Festschrift für Wilhelm Eilers* (Wiesbaden 1967), 136–143.

42. Yasna 38.1–2, Yasna 42.3; Vendīdād, Fargard II.20ff., and Fargard XVIII.103; Bundahišn 15.1; Zādsparam 10.3; Bahman Yašt 2.8; Šāyast-nē-šāyast 13.14, 15.20–25; Saddar 33.2, 45.5. On the identification of Ārmaiti as earth in both Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian sources, see H. W. Bailey, "Iranian Studies V," *BSOAS* VIII: 1 (1935), 142; idem, Saka śśandrāmata," op. cit., 136–143.

43. Bundahišn 15.1; Zādsparam 10.3; Šāyast-nē-šāyast 15.20–24, 22.5, 23.1; Dādistān-i-Dēnīg 64.6.

44. Zādsparam 22.9–10.

hell."[45] The abstract Gāthic qualities of Ārmaiti which survived in her later function as a protector of the Zoroastrian religion[46] were thus combined with a chthonic aspect which was perhaps a magian contribution ultimately of Mesopotamian origin.[47]

As earth, Spenta Ārmaiti was frequently coupled with heaven in Zoroastrian hymns that, nevertheless, identified her as a creature of Ahura Mazdā.[48] But in the pre-Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian Iranian beliefs, such as those held by the eastern Saka, heaven and earth represented two equally important creative entities.[49] Bountiful earth was particularly venerated by the sedentary Iranian populations that lived beyond the sphere of influence of the Zoroastrian reforms.

Although intangible,[50] Spendarmad, or Spenta Ārmaiti, occasionally manifested herself in the form of a woman. As protectoress of the water rights of Iranian lands, Ārmaiti's manifestation was clearly symbolic. She appeared as a maiden dressed "in a bright robe which shone forth in all directions for a *hasr's* length, that is, about two *parasangs*. And she was girt with a golden girdle which was the Religion of the Mazdayasnians."[51] Whereas pictorial representations of Ārmaiti are lacking in Persian art, those of her Saka equivalent, Śśandrāmata, the personified earth, have been identified by Sir H.W. Bailey.[52] The Saka Śśandrāmata is depicted in the Buddhist art of Khotan and Tumšuq, in Chinese Turkestan, as a four-armed enthroned goddess,[53] following the formula used for the representa-

45. Vendīdād, Fargard III.35.

46. Yašt 1.27ff., Dēnkard, Book IX:31.17, 42.10, 43.21, 60.4, 69.14ff.; Zādsparam 12.2.

47. For other instances of the transmission of Mesopotamian religious notions to Iranian beliefs through the medium of the Magians, see A.D.H. Bivar, "Religious Subjects on Achaemenid Seals," *Mithraic Studies*, ed. J.R. Hinnells (Manchester 1975), 103–104; idem, "Mithra and Mesopotamia," ibid., 286.

48. Yasna 38.1–2; Vendīdād, Fargard XIX.13.

49. For a discussion of the religious beliefs of the Pontic Scythians, see O.G. von Wesendonk, "Arəmati als arische Erdgottheit," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* XXVII:1–2 (Leipzig/Berlin 1929), 73ff.; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Values in Zoroastrianism, Their Survival and Renewal* (New York/Evanston 1970), 29. On the religious beliefs of the eastern Saka, see Bailey, "Saka śśandrāmata," op. cit., 136–153.

50. Šāyast-nē-šāyast 15.3.

51. Zādsparam 4.4–6, translated by R.C. Zaehner, *Zurvan, a Zoroastrian Dilemma* (Oxford 1956), 163.

52. Bailey, "Saka śśandrāmata," op. cit., 142; idem, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books*, op. cit., 52; idem, *Khotanese Texts* IV, op. cit., 12.

53. For the images of the Saka Śśandrāmata, see N.V. D'iakonova, in *Kul'tura i iskusstvo narodov vostoka* 6, *TGĖ* V (1961), 257–272. This author points to the following connections between the native non-Buddhist religions of Khotan and that of Sogdiana: (1) A chthonic cult associated with the ancestors of the ruling dynasty; (2) the occurrence of a pair of divinities at the head of the pantheon.

tions of Nanā in Khwarezmian and Sogdian art.[54] The resemblance between the Nanā images of Transoxiana and the Saka Śsandrāmata exceeds their formal ties with Indian models; it testifies rather to a mutual relationship in the conception of the two groups of divine images.

Finally, the ascendance and prevalence of the cult of Nanā in early medieval Transoxiana would be satisfactorily explained if Nanā's functions were equated with those of the principal Iranian goddess Ārmaiti. The creative and chthonic aspects of Ārmaiti, or Spenta Ārmaiti, would then have been transferred to the regional cult of Nanā in Transoxiana. This fusion would then explain Nanā's association with the Sogdian funerary and dynastic cult, her role in the native Sogdian cult of Adonis,[55] and the parallelisms between her imagery in Transoxiana and the representations of the Saka Śsandrāmata.

It may be supposed that the syncretic cult of Nanā-Ārmaiti was fairly widespread throughout the east Iranian world in early medieval times. The name of Spenta Ārmaiti appears as a compound among theophoric names on Parthian ostraca from Nisa.[56] It is perhaps likely that the important Nanā sanctuary which was reportedly situated at Nisa[57] was dedicated not to Anāhitā, whose name is absent from the theophoric names from Nisa, but to the combined cult of Nanā-Ārmaiti.

The goddess represented in the Sogdian murals and on the Khwarezmian silver vessels may represent, therefore, a conceptual synthesis of the pre-Zoroastrian functions of Ārmaiti, the earth, and those of Nanā, the Mesopotamian goddess of war and fertility.[58]

54. For examples from Khwarezmian art, see above, n. 22, for Sogdian images, see above, n. 10.

55. Henning, "A Sogdian God," op. cit., 252; E. Chavannes, *Les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux* (Paris 1942), 132–133, n. 5; Azarpay, "Iranian Divinities in Sogdian Painting," op. cit. The connection between the goddess Nanā and the native cult of Adonis found in Sogdiana recalls the Phrygian myth of Pesinonte, reported by Arnobius (V, 6, 12), in which Nanā is given as the name of the daughter of the river Sangarios, mother of Attis. But as Cumont noted, no cult is known to have been associated with this Anatolian Nanā, see *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, op. cit., 196, n. 5.

56. I.M. D'iakonov, V.A. Livshits, *Dokumenty iz Nisy I v. do n. è.* (Moskva 1960), 24; idem, in *Sbornik v chest' akademika I.A. Orbeli, Issledovaniia po istorii kul'tury narodov vostoka* (Moskva/Leningrad 1960), 332.

57. Idem, in *Perednеaziatskoi sbornik* II, *Deshifrovka i interpretatsiia pis'mennostii drevnego vostoka* (Moskva 1966), 152, n. 66 (No. 1682, 1741, 228, 1243); idem, in *Sbornik v chest' akademika I.A. Orbeli*, op. cit., 329.

58. M. Bussagli had argued for the identification of the four-armed goddess represented in the mourning scene from the Panjikent mural as a syncretic being in whose imagery were combined the qualities of the Kushan ARDOXSHO and NANA, see "Cusanica et Serica II," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* XXXVI:I (Roma 1961), 94ff., n. 5, See also the speculations of R. Ghirshman, "Une coupe sassanide à scène d'investiture," *W.B. Henning Memorial Volume* (London 1970), 168–179.

The River Goddess

The attributes of the Sogdian Nanā distinguish the representations of that four-armed goddess from a second goddess, also shown with four arms, depicted in murals (from two consecutive building periods of a chapel and hall) uncovered in the precincts of the second temple at Panjikent. In the earlier mural, uncovered in the chapel, the haloed goddess is two-armed and is seated, with outspread knees, on a golden throne supported on the back of a winged canine that may have been duplicated on the now damaged right side of the throne (fig. 34). She wears a crown composed of multiple discs, and a lotus-shaped floral motif, reminiscent of the headdress worn by some high-ranking donors in the early medieval murals from Tukhāristān.[59] The goddess wears a loose garment that falls in deep and regular folds above an ornamental belt, and a thin cape that falls in undulating bands from her shoulders. A rectangular musical intrument with bell attachments is shown on her right and a male attendant on her left. Her attributes include a crown or scepter with ribbons held in her right hand and a banner in her left (see *Part One*, p. 73).

A slightly later mural from the adjacent hall in this small complex attributes additional symbols to the same goddess. The haloed goddess here has shoulder flames, four arms, a fitted garment and enveloping cape, and a reptilian animal vehicle (fig. 13, pl. 27). The banner and the aquatic function of the goddess identify her as a later version of the earlier two-armed goddess whose aquatic function was suggested by her lotus-shaped crown. Her additional attributes are in effect formal rather than substantive changes that indicate the development of new forms of Sogdian dress and footwear and a more emphatic symbolism. The fish-tailed *makara*-like vehicle of the goddess, like her multiple arms, doubtless echo Indian artistic influences that reached Sogdiana during the period of the Hephthalite domination of that region in the early sixth century.[60] Although the banner, musical instrument, and aquatic associations of the goddess clearly depict her as a river goddess, her exact identity remains tentative.[61]

59. Godard et al., *Les antiquités bouddhiques de Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* II (Paris 1928), pl. 23.

60. Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 5–7.

61. A watercourse and a grove of trees apparently existed within the immediate vicinity of the shrines in the northern precincts of *Temple II* at Panjikent. Belenitskii and Marshak regarded these as further reference to the aquatic function of the goddess with a banner worshipped in the shrines, see ibid., and idem, in *SGE* XXXVI (1973), 58ff. The association of the banner with the two images of this goddess might suggest her identification with Anāhitā, cf. S. Wikander, *Feuerpriester in Kleinasien und Iran* (Lund 1946), 76. But the identification is at best speculative.

Mithra, Male Divinities and Other Religious Themes

The group of immortals to the right of the funeral bier in the mourning scene from the second temple at Panjikent includes a beardless male figure, bent on one knee as he lowers a flaming torch (fig. 49). The posture, hoodlike cap, youthful face, rayed halo and head and shoulder flames of this figure relate it to representations of the Iranian god Mithra, whose name and image appear on Kushan coins of the second to the fourth centuries.[62] As the Iranian god of contracts, Mithra's solar associations in the earlier Indo-Iranian pantheon are recalled in his epithet "endowed with own light" (*hvāraoxšna-*) even in the Zoroastrian context.[63] The lowered torch of the god in the Sogdian mural from Panjikent, intended as a reference to the funerary significance of the scene, appears to repeat a familiar formula found in the Mithraic imagery and funerary art of the Roman west.[64] The iconography of the Sogdian image of Mithra, which differs from that associated with the god in Sasanian and Kushan art, is thus derived from provincial Roman models that originated in territories to the west of the Sasanian empire.[65]

Another instance of Sogdian adaptation from Roman provincial art is met in the Sogdian version of the Romulus and Remus motif (fig. 59) and legend which differs from the version adopted in Sasanian art.[66] Roman models are also recalled

62. Belenitskii, in *Zhivopis'*, 69. Bussagli, in *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* XXXVI: II (Roma 1961), 100. The lowered torch of the god in the Panjikent mural is here compared to the gesture of one of the dadophori in Mithraic representations in Roman provincial art, cf. also F. Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra* (New York 1956), 128ff. Bussagli evidently mistook Belenitskii's reference to the torches held by two mortals in the mourning scene from Panjikent for a reference to the torch held by the male divinity in the same painting. For representations of Mithra in Kushan art, see Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, 81–82.

63. See the Sogdian marriage contract from Mugh, V.A. Livshits, *SÈ* 5 (1960), 76ff.; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *La religion de l'Iran ancien, Les anciennes religions orientales* III (Paris 1962), 37; I. Gershevitch, *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra* (Cambridge 1959), 30, 35ff.

64. M.J. Vermaseren, *Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae* I (The Hague 1956), no. 1359, fig. 355, passim. For comparable representations of Attis as torchbearer in Roman art, see idem, *The Legend of Attis in Greek and Roman Art* (Leiden 1966), 13–17.

65. See above, n. 31. Since Mithra did not function as a savior god in Persia proper, his presence in the cult of resurrection in Sogdiana would suggest familiarity with the western Mithra's savior cult in the east Iranian world. The possibility of a direct link between the Mithraic art of the Roman west and Gandhāran art was contemplated by A.C. Soper, see "Aspects of Light Symbolism in Gandhāran Sculpture," *Artibus Asiae* XII: 3 (1949), 262–263.

66. In the Sogdian version of the Romulus and Remus motif, the she-wolf has its head turned towards the suckling infants, cf. a gold bracteate from the *Temple II* area, at Panjikent (diam. 2.3 cm), in A.M. Belenitskii, "Obshchie rezul'taty raskopok gorodishcha drevnego Pendzhikenta (1951–1953 gg.)," *MIA* 66 (Moskva/Leningrad 1958), 135, fig. 33: 3. The same posture is repeated in the representation of the she-wolf in the Sogdian mural from Shahristān, Ustrushana, see N.N. Negmatov, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov Ustrushany," *SA* 3 (1973), fig. 15. The more naturalistic

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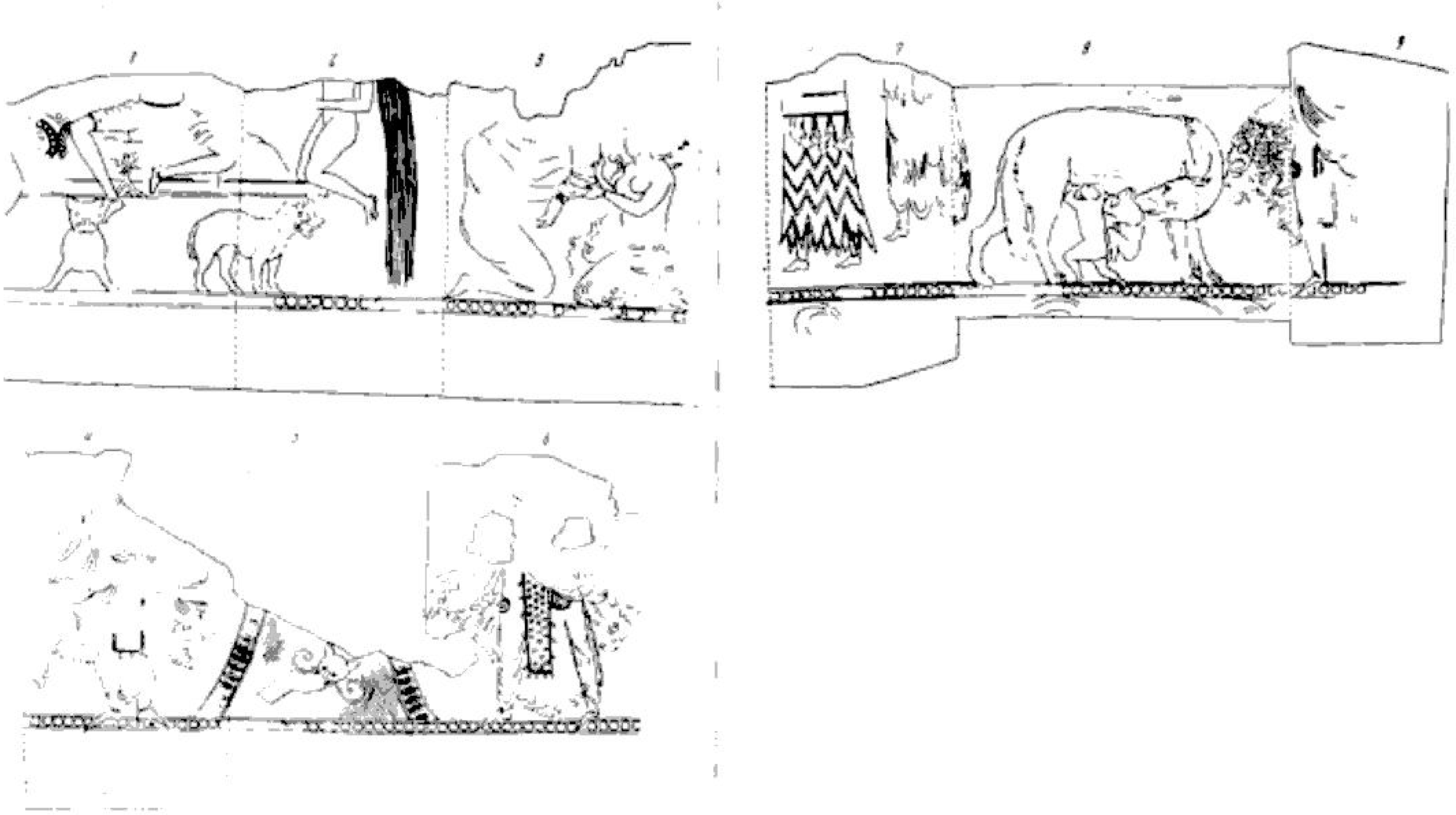

Figure 59. A Sogdian version of the Romulus and Remus legend, depicted in a mural from Room 1, Qal'a-i Qahqaha I, Ustrushana. Sketch after Negmatov, in SA *3, 1973, fig. 15.*

in the iconography of a secondary deity depicted on a Sogdian terra-cotta ossuary from Biia-naiman, in the Hermitage Museum.[67] The figure depicted on the extreme right side of that ossuary carries a large key in the manner of key-bearing

posture of the wolf in the Sogdian representations contrasts with the treatment of the motif in Persian art, see A.D.H. Bivar, "A Parthian Amulet," *BSOAS* XXX:3 (1967), 512–525; idem, *Catalogue of the Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum, Stamp Seals* II, *The Sassanian Dynasty* (London 1969), 27, EA 1/119353, EA 2/119911.

67. A.IA. Borisov, "K istolkovaniiu izobrazhenii na biianaimanskikh ossuariiakh," *Trudy otdela vostoka, Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh* II (Leningrad 1940); A.M. Belenitskii, "Nakhodka zheleznogo kliucha v Piandzhikente," *KSIIMK* XXIX (1949), 100–105; B.IA. Staviskii, "Ossuarii iz Biia-naiman," *TGE* V, *Kul'tura i iskusstvo narodov vostoka* 6 (Leningrad 1961), 162–176; Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, op. cit., 42–46.

images of Cautopates and Zrvān or Aion in Roman Mithraic art.[68] That the goddess with the key on the Sogdian ossuary may have been intentionally paired with the male divinity represented in the adjacent arch is suggested by the pairing of the divine couple on the left side of the ossuary.[69] The attributes of the couple on the left recall those of ARDOXSHO and PHARRO who are similarly paired in Kushan art[70] (see also *Part One*, p. 71).

The faint echoes of Roman art, noted in the foregoing examples of Sogdian art, may be attributed to the period just prior to the defeat of the Hephthalites by the combined forces of the Sasanian Persians and the Turks in A.D. 557. When the native Sogdian artistic style crystallized in the seventh and early eighth centuries, it was the artistic idioms of Central Asia and Sasanian Persia that prevailed in Transoxiana. The three-headed god depicted in armor in the murals from Shahristan, Ustrushana, and *Panjikent XXII:1* (fig. 5) bears the attributes of the Sogdian god *Wyšprkr*, recently identified by H. Humbach with the Iranian wind god Vayu, the Indian Mahādeva/Śiva and the *Oēšo* of the Kushan coins.[71] The three functions of *Wyšprkr*, creation, preservation and destruction, symbolized by the three heads, though alien to orthodox Zoroastrianism, evidently found currency in the heterodox east Iranian Zoroastrian world[72] (see *Part One*, pp. 29f.).

68. Vermaseren, *Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae* II, no. 1110: fig. 285, no. 1163: fig. 309; I, no. 103: fig. 36, no. 312: fig. 85, no. 314: fig. 86, no. 543: fig. 152.

69. Belenitskii's identification of the goddess with the key on the Biia-naiman ossuary as Nanā is questionable, since the images of NANA on the Kushan coins represent her with an animal-headed scepter rather than with a key. For Belenitskii's study, see *KSIIMK* XXIX (1949), 100–105.

70. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, op. cit., 97, fig. 3. For other paired deities in Kushan art, see ibid., no. 165 (OESHO-NAN), no. 166 (OESHO-OMMO), nos. 133, 114 (MAO-MIIRO).

71. H. Humbach, "Vayu, Śiva und der Spiritus vivens im ostiranischen Synkretismus," *Acta Iranica, Monumentum H.S. Nyberg* I (Leiden 1975), 402–408.

72. Ibid., 405.

4. Style

A deep reverence for living organisms and a delight in nature had long provided the Indian *Śilpin*, or professional painter of murals, with themes that were capable of expressing the world about him in all its variety and complexity. The general adherence to the six principles of Indian painting is evidenced, furthermore, in the Gupta paintings preserved at Bagh, and in the contemporaneous Vakataka art of the Deccan, exemplified by paintings from the later caves at Ajanta, the early paintings from Ellora, and those from Aurangabad and Elephanta.[1]

The six prerequisites of Indian painting constituted variety in form, correct proportion, depiction of emotion, infusion of grace, verisimilitude, and the effect of modeling produced by the mixing of colors.[2] Nothing comparable to the opulence of the Indian natural landscape is found in Sogdian painting, where the background of the figures is distinguished by a very modicum of descriptive detail. When they appear in Sogdian painting, landscape elements are clearly subordinated to the action of the protagonists and appear as schematic and perfunctory references without intrinsic interest. A progressive tendency towards two-dimensionality and hieratic or subjective rendition of scale eventually reduces references to architecture and landscape elements in Sogdian painting to flat and decorative props that merely suggest the setting of figural compositions. Thus clouds and mountains are expressed by masses of cusped and lobed patterns, trees and foliage are reduced to limited specimens, and architecture lacks spatial coherence. If the cusped clouds of Sogdian painting are derived from the evanescent globular clouds that define the vaporous upper regions in Indian painting, their systematic reduction to linear and decorative patterns in Sogdian painting indicates a radical departure from the illusionistic treatment of the same subject in Indian painting.[3]

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1. C. Sivaramamurti, in M. Bussagli, *5000 Years of Art of India* (New York, n.d.), 120.
2. Ibid.
3. In Indian painting from Ajanta and from the eighth century paintings found on the ceiling and the west porch of the Kailasantha temple at Ellora, clouds are represented as conglomerations of

Likewise, the schematic trees and flowers represented in narrative compositions in Sogdian painting reduce foliage to simple formulae that are not employed in decorative compositions. The elaborate and naturalistic leaf scrolls found in decorative borders and panels in Sogdian painting (fig. 37), treated in a special study by V.L. Voronina, preserve the Indian and Graeco-Roman prototypes more faithfully in secondary compositions that lack narrative or descriptive importance.[4]

In the narrative context, trees and foliage are uniformly simplified as a laurel-shaped plant supported by a broad and smooth, or lightly patterned stem, colored in a variety of shades with the exception of green (pl. 12, fig. 60). Increase in the dimension of the tree is indicated by a multiplication of the laurel-shaped leaf on additional branches. Neither the stylized reeds of Near Eastern art that survived in Sasanian art nor the Indian banana tree and its ramifications in the Buddhist art of Eastern Turkestan approach the hieroglyphic simplicity of the Sogdian formula.[5] A comparable degree of abstraction, however, is found in the representation of a leaf-shaped tree in Coptic and Syrian art where the formula may have developed out of a fusion of Late Antique and Egyptian stylistic conventions.[6] If the Coptic and Syrian leaf-shaped tree is seen as the end result of developments based on

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cusped and globular shapes that are evanescent along the margins but harden toward the center of the composition, see G. Yazdani, *Ajanta* II (London/New York/Bombay 1930–1955), pl. XXX; S. Kramrisch, *A Survey of Painting in the Deccan* (London 1937), 73ff., pl. VI. A linear version of the modelled clouds of these earlier Indian paintings is found in the spatulate clouds that define the vapors of the upper regions of the sky on the ceiling of the Indra-Sabha cave, Ellora, dated to the twelfth century, see Kramrisch, op. cit., pl. VII.

4. V.L. Voronina, "Arkhitekturnyi ornament drevnego Piandzhikenta," *Skul'ptura*, 89–138.

5. For the Sasanian reed pattern, see the hunting scene on the stucco plaque from Chahar Tarkhan, in the Philadelphia Museum, R. Ghirshman, *Persian Art, the Parthian and Sassanian Dynasties 249 B.C.–A.D. 651* (New York 1962), 229. The same motif appears also in the hunting scene of the Taq-i-Bustan stone reliefs, ibid., fig. 236. For the Indian banana tree in the cave paintings from Ajanta, see Madanjeet Singh, *Ajanta, Ajanta Painting of the Sacred and the Secular* (New York 1965), pls. 31–32, and for a variant in the Buddhist art of Central Asia, see the cave paintings from Qyzil, A. von Le Coq, *Die buddhistische Spätantike Mittelasiens* III, *Die Wandmalereien* (Berlin 1924), pls. 7, 9.

6. The simplified tree in Early Christian art is generally more realistic and detailed than the simplified trees of Syrian and Coptic art, cf. the Early Christian ivory diptych of the third quarter of the fifth century, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, J. Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London 1970), 21, pl. 38. For Coptic versions, see A. Grabar, *Byzantium from the Death of Theodosius to the Rise of Islam* (London 1966), 185, fig. 200 (mural from Mt. Sinai); K. Weitzmann, "An Early Copto-Arabic Miniature in Leningrad," *Ars Islamica* X (1943), 119–134, fig. 16. The Syrian and Coptic type is later adopted in the Armenian miniatures, cf. J. Strzygowski, *Etchmiadzin-Evangeliar* (Wien 1891), 21ff., pls. II, IV (identifies the tree as a cyprus); D.V. Ainalov, *The Hellenistic Origin of Byzantine Art* (New Jersey 1961), 97–99, fig. 47.

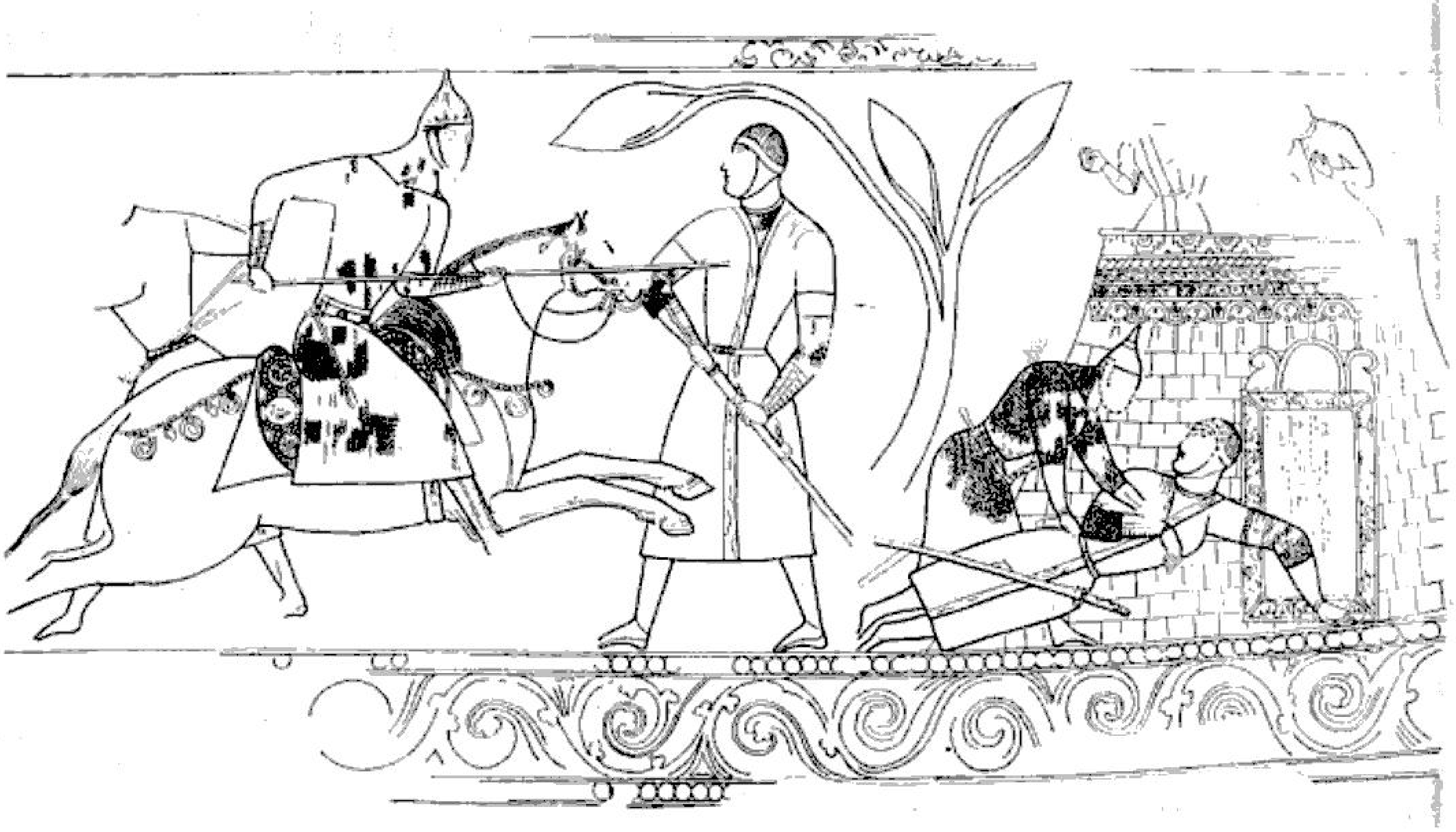

Figure 60. An unknown Sogdian epic depicted in a Sogdian mural from Panjikent XXII:1. *Sketch after Belenitskii,* Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta, *33.*

earlier Egyptian models,[7] no such antiquity could be claimed for the origin of this convention in Sogdian painting. The Sogdian formula may be seen rather as an expression of the general tendency towards simplification and abstraction of realistic regional models that were reduced to a single specimen stripped to the bare essentials. The correspondence between the Sogdian convention for the tree and those used in Syrian, Coptic and later Islamic painting is obviously not indicative of artistic borrowing, even if artistic connections between early medieval Transoxiana and Western Asia are claimed in other instances (see below, chapter 6).[8]

7. C.E. Moldenke, *Die in altägyptischen Texten erwähnten Bäume und deren Verwerthung* (Leipzig 1886), passim.

8. For the leaf-shaped tree in Islamic art, see H. Buchthal, "Early Islamic Miniatures from Baghdad," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* V (Baltimore 1942), figs. 14, 30, 39 (the Baghdad School); S. Walzer, "The Mamluk Illuminated Manuscripts of the Kalila wa-Dimna," *Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst*, ed. R. Ettinghausen (Berlin 1959), 201, fig. 9; R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1962), 62.

Composition

Four basic types of compositions are found in the earliest paintings from *Temple I* and *Temple II* and their precincts at Panjikent. These compositions are connected with four thematic categories that comprise narrative scenes, religious imagery, figural processions associated with religious images, and decorative panels of floral bands, architectural motifs and leaf scrolls. But these categories frequently appear in combination. Thus religious images may be connected to figural processions of donors, or they may be included in narrative scenes, and decorative and architectural motifs are often used as textile and ornamental patterns in all the compositional categories.

Narrative Scenes

The sequence of scenes depicted in the principal *eivān* and tetrastyle hall of *Temple II*, at Panjikent, was prescribed by a bilateral pattern of movement towards the entrance of the sanctuary. The decorative pattern found in the Sogdian temple finds numerous analogies and antecedents in religious structures in Western Asia and the Mediterranean world. Thus in the sixth century Byzantine church of San Appolinare Nuovo in Ravenna the scenes in the mosaic friezes on the two long walls of the nave move toward the image of the Virgin and Christ in the apse. Similarly the scenes in the murals from the third century synagogue at Dura Europos were arranged in counterparts that converged on the axis of the niche on the rear wall facing Jerusalem.[9]

The composition of the individual scenes in the earlier Panjikent paintings (*Temple I* and *Temple II*) is characterized by complicated grouping of interacting figures whose postures, gestures and facial expressions lend dramatic intensity to the scene. The long composition on the south wall of the tetrastyle hall in *Temple II* may serve to exemplify the earlier type.[10] This composition divides the entire face

9. R. Wischnitzer, *The Messianic Theme in the Paintings of the Dura Synagogue* (Chicago 1948), 18, 20ff. For a comparison of the arrangement of the friezes from the Dura synagogue and those of the mithraeum, the Christian baptistery and the temple of the Palmyrene gods, see Comte R. Du Mesnil du Buisson, *Les peintures de la synagogue de Doura-Europos, 245–256 après J.-C.* (Rome 1939), 147ff.

10. In his stylistic study of the Sogdian paintings from Panjikent, D'iakonov (*Zhivopis'*, 127ff.) distinguished four separate artistic styles. The earliest style, *Style I*, according to this study, is represented by the paintings from the portico and tetrastyle hall of *Temple II*. D'iakonov assigned the fragment showing a haloed and bearded frontal figure from the lower layer of painting on the *north wall* of *Panjikent I:10* to a separate stylistic group (*Style II*), in which he saw the influence of Byzantine art. The large body of the later paintings from Panjikent are associated by D'iakonov to

of the south wall of the main hall of the second temple into three groups of figures. The focal point of this composition is the central group arranged around a funeral bier and the reclining body of the deceased (figs. 56, 57). The compact masses of figures on the two ends of the central scene comprise personages whose relatively large scale and attributes suggest divine status. The direction of the bodies and the diagonal thrust of the head of the kneeling figure in the divine group to the east end of the bier reinforce the diagonal movements of figures that converge around the bier of the deceased in the central group. The heads of the gods to the west end of the bier (unpublished) are turned from the bier towards the entrance of the sanctuary and to the small scene that shows figures toppling from the ramparts of a stricken fortress (unpublished, on the south wall of the main hall). Despite its narrative interest, this lateral group is clearly subordinated to the mourning scene by virtue of the distribution of masses, by the convergence of diagonal lines in the central group, and by the subtle use of color contrasts. Thus colors gain in richness and intensity around the center of the composition and are muted and dense in the peripheral areas.

If the direction of movement of the figures on the south wall of the portico to the tetrastyle hall in the second temple leads to a climax in the mourning scene in the center of the south wall of the hall proper, the lateral group of figures on the west end of the same wall provide a subtle transition to subsequent representations. The viewer's attention is also drawn away from the mourning scene to the statuary that originally stood in the wall niches and within the sanctuary.

The use of subtle transitions from one narrative composition to another was further developed in later Sogdian paintings where long epics were represented in sequences of episodes woven into a rhythmic pattern within the horizontal frieze

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Style III and *Style IV*. The mannered gestures and fluent style of these later representations are sufficiently similar as to make such a general stylistic distinction between *Style III* and *Style IV* redundant. Bussagli has thus reduced D'iakonov's categories to two distinct phases represented by the earlier paintings (*Style I* and *Style II*) and the later ones dated to the seventh and early eighth centuries (*Style III* and *Style IV*), see M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia* (Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1963), 43–51. Following the socio-political explanation usually offered in Soviet historical literature, Bussagli considered the development from the plastic to the linear and two-dimensional style in Sogdian painting as symptomatic of a growing detachment from reality. This development could be viewed, on the other hand, as the Sogdian artist's response to the demand for a locally valid, expedient and eloquent artistic language capable of rendering the primarily secular and narrative content of his subject matter. These color contrasts were apparently emphasized when the paintings were restored during the second phase of painting in the *Temple II* complex, see Kostrov, in *Skul'ptura*, 165ff.

(cf. *Panjikent VI: 1, VI: 13, VI: 41*, pls. 4–11, 14–20, figs. 42–44, 60). The presence of breaks between compositions within a single continuous frieze is characteristic for some long pictorial epic friezes. These breaks, which offer the viewer occasion for pause, suggest the finality of each episode and permit the viewer to leave the narrative at a definite juncture. The pause also implies the narrator-artist's decisive role in determining points of stress and omission in a given narrative. Each episode in the later narrative friezes is composed of a standard compositional scheme in which symmetry and hieratic groupings predominate.[11] Landscape and architectural references that provided descriptive details in the earlier paintings are minimized in the later Sogdian murals in which figures are placed against a flat background or in a setting in which landscape elements are schematic and ornamentalized. Human figures are reduced in number in the later compositions and are standardized according to a consistent repertory of dress, ornament, gesture and posture. Facial expressions are replaced by bodily gestures, but the simple ornaments and limited dress categories of the earlier paintings are considerably expanded in the later period. Thus, whereas the narrower range of compositional schemes in the later Sogdian paintings assured effective control of dramatic intensity, the reduction of figures and their expression through a standard formal language provided for an explicit and eloquent expression of the narrative.

Since formulas were the artist's means of expressing the theme, an artist's stock of formulas corresponded to his thematic repertory. Yet despite the formulaic character of the pictorial epic, no two compositions are treated in exactly the same way. Individual styles indicate the presence of different hands, artistic sensibilities, and levels of skill (see below, chapter 5, The sketch). Each example of the pictorial epic is a unique expression created by an artist who was capable of communicating a new or familiar idea or theme according to his own system of conventions. Like the poet of the oral epic, the artist of the pictorial epic was not a conscious iconoclast but a traditional creative artist.[12]

A second type of composition is found in connection with secondary narrative panels. These depict scenes of daily life and folklore and are sometimes found in a narrow frieze along the lower edge of walls in some of the residential quarters at Panjikent (cf. *Panjikent III: 7, VI: 41, XXI: 1*, figs. 54, 55, pls. 10, 12, 13, 25). In contrast to the rhythmic flow of the compositional sequences in the continuous

11. For a detailed analysis of the compositional scheme in *Panjikent III: 7*, see Kostrov, in *Skul'ptura*, 152ff.

12. Cf. A.B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass. 1960), 4–5.

narrative, these narrower registers are divided into small rectangular panels with independent and often synoptic compositions, expressed in a terse and sketchy style, with a minimum of color. The eloquent gestures, expressed with remarkable economy, and the rapid transition of the thematic sequence in the abbreviated and conflated compositions are well suited to the content of these small panel compositions (see above, pp. 118–119).

The Human Figure

The representation of the human form in Sogdian painting, regardless of its thematic content, followed current aesthetic norms that offer a key to the stylistic classification of the paintings. If the use of the profile and three-quarter views of the head, plastic modeling, softly waved brown hair, beardless oval face, regular and fine features of the figures in the earliest Sogdian paintings from Panjikent (D'iakonov's *Style I*) recall traits peculiar to the earlier Graeco-Iranian style, the slender proportions, tapered limbs of the figures and their iconography associate them with a distinctive early medieval school of painting (cf. figs. 23, 24, 34, 49, 56, 57). The human figure in the earliest Sogdian paintings is represented, furthermore, in relatively varied and unconventional poses accompanied by complicated gestures and frequently with varied facial expressions (cf. figs. 49, 56, 57).

In the later Sogdian paintings (D'iakonov's *Styles III* and *IV*, see above, n. 10), the proportions of the human figure are further abstracted and attenuated, and the facial features and gestures are generally standardized (cf. figs. 45, 46, 53, pl. 28). The idealized heads of the later Sogdian paintings are characterized by an oval face, elongated and narrow eyes, thin and often angular nose placed close to a small mouth, and smooth black hair defined by a sharp and angular hairline and dangling sidelocks or tresses (pl. 28).

Men of mature age are rarely bearded in the later Sogdian paintings. They are usually depicted with a thin drooping moustache and a suggestion of facial hair indicated by vertical black strokes on the chin (fig. 53). The layered treatment of softly curled hair found in connection with certain figures, such as the hero of the "Rustam cycle" (*Panjikent VI:41*, pl. 9), and the red-haired female head from *Panjikent VI:13*, apparently revives an earlier type recorded in a mural from the earliest layer of painting at *Panjikent I:10P*. D'iakonov tentatively classified that painting as a separate style (*Style II*), of possibly Byzantine or Armenian inspiration. Indeed, the treatment of the layered hair and beard of the frontal head in *Panjikent I:10P* echoes the softly curled hair of the Graeco-Iranian style. But that

style survived also in archaizing representations in various media in Central Asian art into the early medieval period[13] (cf. the hair of the figures on the metal vessels depicted in *Panjikent XVI:10*, fig. 36). Thus Central Asian antecedents existed for the layered treatment of the hair and beard of the personage represented in *Panjikent I:10P*, which may have in turn inspired the curled hair, treated as a flat mass, in the later layer of paintings from *Panjikent I:10, north* and *east walls*.

Although the expression of emotion in human figures in the later Sogdian paintings is generally limited to a conventional language of gestures, extreme emotions in connection with wounded or dying[14] and demoniac figures are often expressed by facial contortions (pls. 14–19). Thus the bestial adversaries of the hero of the "Rustam cycle," *Panjikent VI:41* (pl. 11), and the dancing demons on the walls of the small palace at *Qal'a-i Qahqaha I*, in Ustrushana, are exceptionally depicted with uncontrolled and frantic facial contortions that contrast with the calm demeanor and standardized facial expressions of their human adversaries.

Elsewhere where historical accuracy was demanded by the subject matter, as in scenes of a documentary nature, the painter emphasized differences in ethnic type, gesture, mode of dress and accoutrement (pl. 22, fig. 52). Thus the Mongolian physiognomy and plaited hair of the men, identified as Turks, in the mural from the residence at Samarkand, serve to distinguish them from the Sogdians in the same mural. The transformation of the ideal facial type from the wide-eyed, and sharp-featured earlier type (fig. 56) to the slightly Mongoloid later type in Sogdian painting (fig. 53) suggests the introduction of new aesthetic norms adopted in the seventh and eighth centuries when the Turks were politically active in Sogdian cities.[15] The change in Sogdian military equipment (see above, pp. 120–125) and the popularity of the cross-legged position of seated aristocratic individuals in later Sogdian art may also be attributed to the same influence[16] (cf. fig. 52).

13. See the early medieval (pre-Islamic) bronze figure of a horseman from the Verkhny Tuy valley, Perm region, in the Hermitage Museum, A. Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, Archaeologia Mundi (Cleveland/New York 1968), fig. 48. The same hairstyle occurs in a more linear version on the Sogdian terra-cotta ossuary from Biia-naiman, see A. A. Potapov, "Rel'efy drevnei Sogdiany, kak istoricheskii istochnik," *VDI* 2 (1938), 127–137; B.IA. Staviskii, "Ossuarii iz Biia-naiman," *TGE* V, *Kul'tura i iskusstvo narodov vostoka* 6 (1961), 162–176.

14. The wounded and dying figures are exceptionally represented with contorted facial expression in the "Amazonomachy," *Panjikent XXI:1*.

15. D'iakonov considered the standard physiognomy depicted in the later Sogdian paintings to be an exaggerated version of the earlier type and thus a reflection of the native Sogdian ideal of beauty, see *Zhivopis'*, 129.

16. Although the cross-legged posture of seated princely individuals appears in the earlier Sogdian murals (cf. Panjikent, *Temple II*, *eivān* murals excavated in 1970), the prevalence of this posture in

Among the foreigners depicted in the murals from Samarkand were men whose Mongolian features and mode of dress identify them as members of a Chinese mission. The historical documentaries, more recently uncovered among the murals from the ruler's palace at Panjikent, are similarly noteworthy for their accuracy of descriptive detail. The men who handle the siege engine are dressed in long shirts similar to the dress worn by a turbaned man with a sword belt worn on a shoulder in the manner of the Arabs depicted in another mural fragment from the same site[17] (figs. 28, 29, 31; left).

It would appear then, that in the representation of the human form, the Sogdian painters strove towards a refinement of basic traits that were already formulated in the earliest paintings from Panjikent. The tendency towards the standardization of physiognomy and proportion is accompanied by the development of a consistent repertory of gestures and postures that generally replace the use of unconventional gestures and facial expressions as means for the communication of emotion. Grimacing or unconventional faces and ethnic distinctions were thus introduced to achieve either a dramatic effect (cf. pl. 11) or realism in the context of the historical documentary (fig. 52).

Proportion

The formal inspiration for the representation of the human body in Sogdian painting is derived from the living human model rather than from a metaphoric reference to abstract concepts and organic forms in nature. Furthermore, unlike Indian art where divine images established the models for the aesthetic and ethical qualities embodied in the human form, in Sogdian painting the human form provides the prototype for divine imagery.[18] The crystallization of a consistent language of gesture and posture in Sogdian painting was accompanied by the development of canons of proportion according to which a ratio of 1:6 to 1:8 was established be-

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the later paintings suggests its popularity in the seventh and eighth centuries. On the Turkish origin of the cross-legged seated posture associated with princely individuals in the Panjikent murals, see K. Otto-Dorn, "Türkisch-islamisches Bildgut in den Figurenreliefs von Achthamar," *Anatolia* VI (1961–62), 2ff., no. 7. I wish to thank Professor K. Otto-Dorn for drawing my attention to this detail. In the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang's report a religious explanation is given for the avoidance of wooden seats by the Turks, see S. Beal's translation of Hui-li, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang* (London 1911), 43.

17. Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 57–58.

18. Siri Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne d'après les textes du Śilpa*, *Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'études* LXII (Paris 1957), 19ff.; B. Rowland, *The Evolution of the Buddha Image* (New York 1963), 14.

tween the length of the face and that of the body.[19] The adoption of standard postures, produced perhaps by means of a plumb line, and the use, though negligible, of the principle of foreshortening, suggest a familiarity on the part of the Sogdian painter with Indian techniques of painting.[20] According to the Indian seventh century treatise, the *Viṣṇudharmottara,* figurative composition was conceived according to two fundamental principles: proportion (*pramāna*) and pose (*sthāna*).[21] The rules of proportion that served to guide the Indian painter in his definition of the human form consisted of a balance of specific measurements (*māna*) given for various parts of the body.[22] According to the earliest sources, the human figure was to be expressed according to the particular characteristics of its component parts, i.e., head, chin, torso, etc. By the seventh century the dimensions of the human form in the pictorial arts were already codified according to a system of measurement that relied on a basic unit represented by the length of the face (scalp to chin). This unit, which was believed to correspond with the length of the palm of the hand (*tāla*),[23] was the basis for the measurement of the proportions of some ten classes of images that were further assigned to the subdivisions of "superior," "middling" and "inferior" proportions. Thus supreme deities, such as Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, were depicted according to the "superior" measurements (*uttama-daśa-tāla*), that consisted of 124 *aṅgulas*, while "middling" and "inferior" images measured 120 and 116 *aṅgulas* respectively.[24] These measurements, however,

19. D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 129.

20. The references to the *Viṣṇudharmottara* given here are based on the commentary and interpretation of the text offered by Siri Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, in which the author has offered a number of revisions of earlier translations and interpretations. For earlier translations of the text, see S. Kramrisch, *The Viṣṇudharmottaram* (Calcutta University Press 1924); A.K. Coomaraswamy, "Viṣṇudharmottara, Chapter XLI," *JAOS* 52:1 (1932), 13–21.

21. On the meaning of these terms, see Gunasinghe, op. cit., 20, n. 2.

22. Indian canons of proportion designate the sum total of the measurements of the various parts of the body as an estimate determined by the real constitution of the body. Pictorial measurements, on the other hand, were regarded as an approximation of reality and were thus idealized and conventionalized according to the artist's conception of beauty, see Gunasinghe, op. cit., 40; A.K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art* (Harvard University Press 1934), 15ff.; J. Auboyer, *Arts et styles de l'Inde* (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1951), 16ff.

23. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Tālamāna or Iconometry, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* 3 (Calcutta 1920), 35ff.

24. The prescribed measurements show that the actual ratio between the measurements of the face (*tāla*) and the body was usually at variance with the numerical implications of Sanskrit terminology for these classes. Thus the length of the *uttama-daśa-tāla* class is 124 *aṅgulas*, but its *tāla* is 13½ *aṅgulas* which yields a total of only 9 *tālas* for these images. In other words, the ratio between the face and the body is one to nine instead of one to ten as implied by the etymology. A total of eight *tālas* is prescribed for representations of human beings, and six to seven *tālas* for images of children and dwarfs, see Gopinatha Rao, op. cit., 36, 42.

were apparently subject to change according to the taste and practice of different artistic schools.[25]

According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, the posture (*sthāna*) of images was determined by the guidelines of *plumb line* and *foreshortening* ("increase and diminution"). A plumb line probably defined the vertical axis of each figure by means of a flexible medial and two fixed lateral lines. The central points of the body were localized along the medial line which swayed the direction of the body by its motion. The principle of foreshortening (*kṣayavṛddhi*) operated according to the degree of deflection of the medial line towards one of the fixed lateral lines. Thus if the medial line was moved to the left, then the field of vision would be reduced on the left side of the figure and increased on the right.[26] This principle was applied to each object irrespective of its relative scale or spatial position in a given composition. Such canonical principles which permitted only a limited repertory of postures and their combinations in the representation of divine images were evidently less rigidly observed in earlier Buddhist art[27] and in Indian secular imagery.[28]

According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, the language of gestures in Indian art was borrowed from the arts of dancing, music and song.[29] By comparison with the facile grace and complex symbolism of gestures found in Indian art the Sogdian language of gestures is strikingly abrupt and explicit. The Sogdian ideal in figural representation also contrasts with the Indian in its formal expression and its substantive significance. Thus the conceptual and two-dimensional figures of later Sogdian painting, the simple and mannered gestures, the narrow oval heads and distinctive facial features of the Sogdian type represent an ideal that is fundamentally different from the supple-bodied, full-lipped and exophthalmic Indian type. Furthermore, the representation of the human form in Sogdian painting gains coherence and importance by its relevance to the thematic substance and content of the painting, and not by its symbolism. If the Sogdian artist adopted Indian

25. Gopinatha Rao, op. cit., 42.
26. Gunasinghe, op. cit., 25ff.
27. Ibid., 32.
28. Ibid., 30.
29. Ibid., 22. The interrelationship between the expressive devices used in the various Indian artistic media is evidenced by the histrionic postures and symbolic gestures of the figures in the paintings from Ajanta. A familiarity with the symbolic language of gestures in Indian drama, therefore, provides a key to the interpretation of the action of human figures in Indian painting. The significant posture, gestures and eye movements of human figures in Buddhist art are thus based on an ultimately symbolic language of gestures that had developed in the theater and representational art of India.

principles of posture and proportion he used them towards the refinement of local artistic trends and with different objectives. The achievement of the Sogdian painter thus lies in his creation of an original and consistent artistic style expressed primarily through his manipulation of the human form. The selective reduction of the human form to standard formulae in Sogdian painting above all serves to heighten and clarify the narrative impact of the composition.

Religious Imagery

The two-armed enthroned goddess, represented on the chapel wall from the northern precincts of *Temple II* at Panjikent (fig. 34), dominates the composition in this, perhaps the earliest, example of wall painting from Panjikent. The central position of the image, its hieratic scale and the reduction of background elements to the essential attributes of the goddess establish a precedent for later religious imagery in Sogdian painting. The use of the same ground line for the goddess and the donor figure, the subtle spatial interrelationship between the two figures suggested by a slight overlap, and the small difference in the relative scale of the two figures are stylistic traits that are peculiar to the earliest compositions from Panjikent (cf. *Panjikent I:5, north wall*). In the later representations of divinities at Panjikent the donor figures become increasingly diminutive in scale (fig. 3), and the spatial relationship between the divine image and the donor becomes progressively conceptual and inconsistent, cf. *Panjikent VI:26, south wall* (fig. 58), *Panjikent XXIV:2, 3* (figs. 7, 8).

The two-armed goddess from the chapel wall, from the *Temple II* precincts at Panjikent (fig. 34), is represented with the head in three-quarter view, frontal body, symmetrically raised arms and parted knees. If the distinctive stance, plastically modeled face, flying ribbons, regularly spaced drapery folds, and the winged animal support of the throne associate this composition with Kushan and Sasanian artistic conventions, and ultimately with the Graeco-Iranian artistic style, the attenuated proportions of the figure, and its distinctive dress and iconography indicate a departure from those earlier models.[30] The Kushan and Sasanian parallels, nevertheless, confirm the fifth to sixth century date determined for the Sogdian painting on archaeological grounds. In the representation of the four-armed goddess (fig. 13) from the subsequent building in the precincts of *Temple II* at Panjikent (*Panjikent II: northern precincts, niche in the western wall of hall*), plastic

30. Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGÉ* XXXVI (1973), 58–61.

modeling and illusionistic drapery effects are replaced by sharply contrasting colors that suggest spatial depth in the drapery folds that edge the scarves tied to the ankles of the goddess. A similar scalloped treatment of drapery is seen on a four-armed goddess depicted at the east end of the mourning scene (fig. 56) found in *Panjikent II:V, tetrastyle hall* (south wall). The fitted garment, the patterned enveloping shawl and iconography of the four-armed image from the *Temple II* precincts indicate further departures from the representations of the two-armed goddess on the earlier chapel wall in the Panjikent *Temple II* precincts. Whereas the costume of the four-armed goddess appears to follow the fashion of feminine dress current in Sogdiana (cf. *Panjikent XXI:1, wall facing the altar*), the four arms of the goddess and her fish-tailed animal vehicle suggest ultimately Indian iconographic models. Similarly, the use of the Indian iconographic formula in the multi-armed divinities in the mourning scene (fig. 56) from *Panjikent II:V, tetrastyle hall* (south wall) would appear to suggest the adoption of Indian artistic conventions that are grafted onto the earlier Graeco-Iranian survivals noted in the representation of the two-armed goddess from the chapel wall from the precincts of *Temple II* at Panjikent.

The representations of divine images in the later paintings from Panjikent frequently preserve the archaistic drapery folds of the earlier images (cf. *Panjikent VI:26, south wall*, fig. 58; four-armed goddess uncovered in 1971 in the Small Hall at Shahristan, Ustrushana) which are there combined with the contemporary Sogdian canons of proportion and posture.[31] The use of plastic modeling was also occasionally revived in later Sogdian paintings that demanded accurate details or realistic effects as in the representation of historical documentaries (cf. helmeted heads in a baked plaster fragment uncovered in 1971 at the Panjikent citadel).

However, the modeled naked body of the blue god in *Panjikent VI:8, north wall*, the blue dancing god represented in the niche in *Panjikent VII*, and three-headed divinities such as that represented in the mural from the niche at *Panjikent XXII:1* (fig. 5) suggest the resumption of contact with artistic conventions of ultimately Indian origin in Sogdian painting of the seventh and eighth centuries. The influence of the Buddhist art of Central Asia is notable in the representation of the three-eyed demons and the four-armed frontal goddess uncovered in the Small Hall at Shahristan in Ustrushana in 1970. The total frontality of the goddess from

31. The stylistic and iconographic particulars of these later murals from Panjikent correspond with those found on a Khwarezmian silver bowl datable to the late seventh century, see G. Azarpay, "Nine Inscribed Choresmian Bowls," *Artibus Asiae* XXXI:2/3 (1969), pl. 4:b.

Ustrushana, exceptional in Sogdian painting, finds analogies in Khotanese murals, as exemplified by the figure of Hāritī from Shrine XII, from Farhād Bēg-Yailāghī, in the National Museum, New Delhi.[32]

The later religious imagery from Panjikent generally displays a more pronounced use of hieratic scale, and a progressive rejection of a coherent spatial relationship between the divine image and donor figures that may be inserted at different levels within the same composition (cf. *Panjikent XXIV:2, vaulted room*, fig. 7).

Figural Processions

A procession of male donors, represented in a horizontal register on the east wall of the chapel in the *Temple II* precincts at Panjikent, was doubtless connected to the representation of the two-armed divinity before the loss of a connecting section of the mural. The entire width of the horizontal register on the east wall is occupied by the five preserved figures of standing donors represented frontally with heads in profile view above a decorative accordion band (figs. 23, 24). The uniform dress of the donors, their slightly overlapping bodies, isocephaly and splayfooted stance recall stylistic conventions found in the Sasanian rock reliefs and in Kushan and Gandhāran art.[33] The overlapping frontal bodies, profile heads and general proportions of these figures are repeated in the early murals excavated in 1971, in the south wing of the *eivān* of *Temple I* at Panjikent, and in the fragmentary representation of the three male figures that face a haloed personage in *Panjikent I:5, north wall*. Their dress and splayfooted stance connect them also with donor figures represented in the Panjikent *Temple II*, *D* and *E*.[34] The strict regularity that characterizes the donor frieze from the north chapel is here reduced by variations in the scale and posture of the figures. The frontal body and foot position associated with the earlier donor frieze recurs in the group of donors represented on the

32. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia*, 54.

33. R. Ghirshman, *Persian Art, the Parthian and Sassanian Dynasties*, figs. 196 (triumph of Shapur I, Bishapur), 233 (investiture of Ardashir II, Tāq-i-Būstān); J. M. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1967), figs. 59, 112; H. Ingholt, *Gandhāran Art in Pakistan* (New York 1957), figs. 24, 303.

34. The standing male figures that were found on the walls that flanked the entrance to the sanctuary in the tetrastyle hall of *Temple II* at Panjikent were interpreted as figures of guards in the earlier publications. Comparison with representations of donors in connection with the divine images in the "chapel" and "hall" in the precincts of *Temple II*, however, suggests their reinterpretation as donors or officiating attendants, see Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 8. The dress of these donor figures is apparently similar to that worn by the seated figures represented in the earliest layer of painting excavated in the *eivān* of *Temple II*, in 1971.

north wall of the hall that contained the representation of the four-armed goddess in the northern precincts of *Temple II* (pl. 27). Here, however, the compact grouping and spatial interrelationship of the earlier donor frieze are replaced by a loosely arranged composition, and isolated donor figures dressed in various styles.

A progressive rejection of realistic spatial values and a tendency towards the use of hieratic scale characterize later compositions that represent donor processions in Sogdian painting. If the earlier donor register is preserved on the lateral wall of the niche with the divine image at *Panjikent VII*, variations in dimension and dress and the kneeling postures are characteristic features of Sogdian compositions of the seventh and eighth centuries.[35] The insertion of additional figures of small kneeling donors into the central composition in the niche in *Panjikent VII*, furthermore, anticipates the use of increasingly diminutive figures of donors that are placed at various levels in the composition in later Sogdian divine imagery (see above, pp. 155–157).

An emphasis on the relative social rank of the donors is suggested not only by the use of hieratic scale, but also by variations in their dress, position and action. Thus the principal donor in the frieze from *Varakhsha:6, east wall*, who performs the religious sacrifice, is distinguished by his relatively large scale, halo and richly ornamented dress.

The partially preserved procession of animals and fantastic creatures in the upper frieze from the Red Hall at *Varakhsha:11* is characterized by a symmetrical grouping of converging files of animals whose regular gait and symbolic trappings suggest their religious significance. This composition is recalled in the striding file of animals, uncovered in a frieze above the portal of the *Small Hall* of the Palace at *Qal'a-i Qahqaha I*, Ustrushana, that may have had similar religious connotations.

35. The dancing figure of the blue divinity and donors in *Panjikent VII* are dated to the seventh century on the basis of stylistic connections with the Balalyk-tepe murals, see Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 9.

5. Materials and Techniques of Sogdian Painting

Preparation of the Ground

In their techniques and use of materials Sogdian painters display a consistency that is less a result of design or preexisting artistic patterns than a response to materials immediately available to them in their physical environment. The meticulous technical analysis of the Sogdian murals from Panjikent by P.I. Kostrov has shown that the murals were generally executed on wall surfaces of unbaked brick covered with two coats of mud plaster (loess composed of both alluvial and pulverized rock) mixed with straw. The first coat (2–25 mm thick) was rougher and sometimes lacked the straw admixture or contained pebbles. The second or top coat (4–5 mm thick) was a fine mud plaster firmly bonded to the lower coat by virtue of its solubility in water. The majority of the paintings from Panjikent were executed not directly on the mud plaster top coat, but on a gypsum plaster primecoat ("ganch") with a possible admixture of kaolin that produced a smooth and white "alabaster" surface.[1]

In the murals from the *eivān* and central tetrastyle hall in the *Temple II* complex at Panjikent, the pigments may have been applied directly on the mud plaster top coat, since traces of the white plaster primecoat were not observed under the original layer of painting[2] (see *Part One*, p. 35f.). The presence or absence of the white plaster primecoat is in itself insufficient ground for the determination of the relative age of the murals, since exposure to moisture tended to cause disintegration of the primecoat. The presence of the plaster primecoat may be seen, rather, as a reflection of the level of artistic standards adopted within a given workshop.[3] The

1. P.I. Kostrov, "Tekhnika zhivopisi i konservatsiia rospisei drevnego Piandzhikenta," in *Zhivopis'*, 161ff.

2. Ibid., 164ff. Technical analysis of the murals discovered in the northern precincts of *Temple II* may throw additional light on the composition of the plaster coat in the earliest examples of painting from Panjikent.

3. Ibid., 184.

use of the smooth and durable white plaster primecoat offered the artist a far brighter surface for the development of his colors than could be obtained from the mud plaster ground. Indeed, in the alterations and repairs made on the first layer of paintings on the walls of the *eivān* and tetrastyle hall in *Temple II*, the later Sogdian painters introduced patches of white plaster primecoat that added a new brightness and luster to the repainted areas.[4] This evidence alone would seem to argue for an earlier date of the paintings executed (or apparently executed) on a mud plaster ground in the *Temple II* complex at Panjikent.[5] However, the two methods associated with the preparation of the ground in the Panjikent murals coexisted from the very beginning of the development of the school of wall painting at Panjikent where the use of the brighter and more durable plaster primecoat later became predominant.[6]

Antecedents for the contemporaneous use of the two methods in the preparation of the ground are also known from murals excavated in other Central Asian sites. Whereas the Khwarezmian painters of the murals at Koi-Krylgan-kala and Toprak-kala utilized the white gypsum plaster primecoat,[7] the Sistanian artists at Kūh-i-Khwāja applied their pigments directly on the cheaper and less durable mud plaster top coat.[8] The use of the white plaster ground, however, predominates in the early medieval Buddhist murals from Tukhāristān and eastern Turkestan as shown by analyses of the paintings from Bāmiyān, Ajina-tepe, Qyzyl and Bäzäk-lik.[9] The use of the white plaster primecoat which extended as far east as Eastern Mongolia, as demonstrated by the murals of the eleventh century from Ching-Ling, was uncommon in China. The murals from the Buddhist temple of Hua

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4. Ibid.

5. Rowland was evidently unacquainted with Kostrov's technical analysis of the paintings from *Temple II*, at Panjikent, when he questioned the chronological sequence proposed on stylistic and technical grounds by D'iakonov, see B. Rowland, *The Art of Central Asia* (New York, 1974), 54ff. Rowland's source of information may have been M. Hallade's review of D'iakonov's chapter in *Zhivopis'* (see *Arts Asiatiques* II:1 [1955], 76–79). Hallade's review omitted mention of the technical analysis of the paintings written by Kostrov for the same volume. For Kostrov's additional remarks, see *Skul'ptura*, 165ff.

6. Technical analysis of the plaster from the earliest murals of the north chapel in the precincts of *Temple II* indicates the use of a white plaster primecoat.

7. See above, chapter 1, note 11.

8. See above, chapter 1, notes 5, 27.

9. *Bāmiyān*: R.J. Gettens, "The Materials in the Wall Paintings of Bāmiyān, Afghanistan," *Technical Studies* VI:3 (1938), 186–193. *Ajina-tepe*: Litvinsky, Zeymal, *Adzhina-Tepa*, 226. *Qyzyl*: R.J. Gettens, "The Materials in the Wall Paintings from Kizil in Chinese Turkestan," *Technical Studies* VI:4 (1938), 281–294. *Bäzäklik*: Yamazaki Kazuo, in *Bijutsu kenkyu* 212 (1960), 135–137, n. 5.

Yen Ssŭ at I-Ch'ang, Tun-huang, and from Ping-Yang Fu, Shansi Province, were executed on a top coat of fine mud plaster composed of kaolin.[10]

The addition of adhesive substances to pigments prior to their application to the dry gypsum plaster, known as the "*fresco secco*" or *tempera* technique, distinguishes the Sogdian method of painting from others found in India and the Mediterranean world. The analysis of Indian murals from Ajanta has substantiated the reference made in the Indian Śilpa texts to the use of yellow underpainting comparable to the *terre verte* of medieval Italian murals.[11] The use of adhesive substances in both pigments and plaster (*intonaco*) prescribed in the Indian manuals on painting[12] as well as the true fresco technique ("*fresco buono*"), in which water soluble pigments were bonded to a moist plaster ground, have not been detected in Sogdian painting.

The Use of Color: Pigments

Technical analysis of the pigments applied to the walls of the *eivān* and tetrastyle hall of *Temple II* at Panjikent has revealed three chronologically different stages in the execution of those murals. To the first or earliest stage (stage I) of painting belongs the entire decorative scheme of the walls of the portico and principal hall of *Temple II* which centered around a funerary scene depicted on wall *V* of the principal hall. This mural as well as those from walls *A*, *G*, *D*, and *E* (published) and the poorly preserved fragments from walls *B*, *Z* and *K* (unpublished) were partially repainted and restored during the second stage (stage II) of painting, at which time patches of white plaster primecoat were introduced and new pigments were added to some of the figures in the major scenes. Thus the mourning scene represented on wall *V* of the central hall was extensively repainted (stage II), whereas its lateral compositions were left more or less in their original condition (stage I). To the last period of painting, or stage III, belongs a single fragment painted on the lower wall of the hall (*G* and *D*) over an earlier decorative border.

10. R.J. Gettens, "Pigments in a Wall Painting from Central China," *Technical Studies* VII:2 (1938), 99–101; Yamazaki Kazuo, in *Bijutsu kenkyu* 212 (1960), 135–137. Kaolin was also used as a primecoat in the Japanese murals in the Golden Hall of the Hōryūji temple, see Yamazaki Kazuo, op. cit., and in *Bijutsu kenkyu* 162:2 (1952), 2–3.

11. B. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (London 1953), 138; Madanjeet Singh, *Ajanta Painting of the Sacred and the Secular* (New York 1965), 64.

12. Madanjeet Singh, *Ajanta*, 61. The discovery of the true fresco technique in the murals from Sittanvāsal indicates knowledge of this technique in India prior to its notice in the twelfth century *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi*, see Siri Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne d'après les textes du Śilpa*, *Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d études* LXII (Paris 1957), 83–89.

This fragment is dated towards the end of the period of artistic activity at Panjikent prior to the abandonment of the temple after the Arab conquest.[13]

The relative chronology of this border pattern is indicated by the fact that it is painted over an earlier geometric pattern that is dated to the second stage or the period of the restoration of the murals in the *Temple II* complex. In contrast to the muted warm pigments used in the earliest stage, the leaf scroll depicted in the latest layer of painting at *Temple II* is sharply outlined with fine grey black lines, and brightened by the use of indigo blue over lemon-yellow orpiment, cadmium red, and rose brown, applied over a white plaster primecoat.

The first two stages of painting were apparently separated by a considerable length of time when appreciable progress was made towards the development of a rich and bright palette. Whereas the murals of the first stage are characterized by their simple and restricted color scheme limited to pure colors and muted warm tones, those of the second stage are distinguished by more contrasting colors and brilliant tones achieved by the use of the white plaster primecoat under the repainted areas. During the second stage natural ultramarine was evidently made available to the Sogdian painters as it was added to their repertory of pigments (see *Part One*, p. 35). The introduction of indigo blue, its admixture to orpiment, and the resulting greyish green color represent further developments in the use of pigments during the third stage of painting at Panjikent (represented by the leaf scroll from *Temple II*, hall wall *G* and *D*).

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The pigments used in the paintings from Panjikent, and apparently those from other major Sogdian schools of painting, were derived almost exclusively from minerals.[14] These pigments were bonded to the dry plaster by means of a vegetable glue that served as both solvent and adhesive agent. The Indian use of adhesives, prescribed in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, differed from the Sogdian in that vegetable glue was used to bond only vegetable pigments, and animal glue was reserved as the adhesive agent in mineral pigments.[15]

The colors associated with the first stage of painting in the *Temple II* complex are principally primary warm tones that included yellow, orange, red, browns and purple violet, derived from natural ferric earths found in abundance in the neighboring mountains. A vermillion red (altered by heat and exposure), derived from

13. Kostrov, *Zhivopis'*, 175.
14. Ibid., 161ff.
15. Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, 53–54.

cinnabar,[16] was also found in the earliest paintings. The latter also included a greyish white color derived from gypsum, and a warm black produced by bone ash.

During the second phase of painting at the *Temple II* complex at Panjikent, in addition to a muted white pigment derived from kaolin, a high intensity gypsum white was used both as pigment and plaster. Other additions to the palette were lemon yellow orpiment, orange realgar,[17] natural ultramarine blue, and a grey black color derived from vegetable soot.

The introduction of the vegetable pigment, indigo blue, and its admixture with orpiment, and the resulting green color, as noted above, are associated with the third and latest phase of painting at Panjikent.[18] A search for a more complex and enriched palette, attested on stratigraphic grounds, thus characterizes painting of the second and third stages when in addition to experimentation with mixed colors used in the first stage, lapis lazuli blue finds extensive use. Comparative study of the pigments used in the paintings in *Temple II* at Panjikent and those from *Temple I* suggest an early date for *Panjikent I:5*, and *Panjikent I:10, east wall* (first layer of painting) which correspond roughly with stage I in the sequence from *Temple II*. The sacrificial scene depicted in *Temple I* (*Panjikent I:10, east and north walls*), (exclusive of restored details), and *Panjikent I:10A* would seem to occupy a transitional position between stage I and stage II in the same sequence. The two-armed goddess and donor figures represented on the chapel wall from the northern precincts of *Temple II* date from the very beginning of the school of painting at Panjikent, whereas the four-armed goddess and attendants represented in the niche and wall of the north hall, also from the northern precincts of *Temple II*, correspond with stage I of the paintings from the portico and central hall of *Temple II*. The remainder of the paintings from Panjikent, as well as those from Samarkand, Varakhsha, and Shahristan, display the later and more complex palette associated with stage II and stage III in the *Temple II* murals.

Imported Pigments

Compared to the palette of the Indian artist, that of the Sogdian painter is remarkably consistent in its limitation to primarily mineral pigments. Only two pigments used by the Sogdian painters are certainly known to have been of foreign origin.

16. The crumbly yellow-red color found on the jacket of the front figure in *Panjikent II:A* (*eivān*), and found in other early sections of the murals from *Temple II* at Panjikent, noted in Kostrov, *Zhivopis'*, 164, was later shown to be cinnabar red.

17. Kostrov, *Zhivopis'*, 180.

18. Ibid., 172.

The first is the durable and brilliant blue pigment derived from lapis lazuli mined in Badakhshān, in the upper Oxus region, and the second is the duller and more perishable indigo blue, of vegetable origin, probably introduced from India.

If access to the lapis lazuli mines in Badakhshān explains the lavish use of ultramarine blue in the paintings from Bāmiyān, and other early medieval sites in Tukhāristān, factors other than geographic proximity must have played a role in the extensive use and wide distribution of this mineral in other parts of Central Asia in early medieval times.[19] The lapis lazuli mines in Badakhshān were situated in the valley of the upper and middle Kokcha and on the left bank of the upper Oxus. If with Paul Bernard we follow the ancient and medieval sources that place the Aï Khanum plain and the Badakhshān mountains in Sogdian rather than Bactrian territory, then the lavish use of ultramarine in Sogdiana from the sixth century may reflect the reestablishment of the older Sogdian frontiers after the fall of the Hephthalites.[20] Thus political as well as economic conditions, no less than aesthetic considerations, probably led to the spread of this pigment on the one hand to India, and on the other, to more distant centers such as Qyzyl[21] and Turfan[22] in Serindia after the fifth century A.D. The paucity of lapis lazuli pigment in Turfan painting after the mid ninth century is regarded by Albert von Le Coq as the result of the wars in Uighur times that disrupted the lines of communication with the western source of this mineral.[23] More specifically, the interruption in the eastward flow of precious commodities from the western part of Central Asia is perhaps the direct result of the disturbance of earlier economic and commercial patterns produced by the Muslim conquest of Transoxiana and Sistan in the eighth and ninth centuries.

In contrast to the ubiquity of natural ultramarine in later Sogdian painting, indigo blue is notable only because of its rarity.[24] In Sogdian painting, indigo blue

19. R.J. Gettens, "The Materials in the Wall Paintings of Bāmiyān, Afghanistan," *Technical Studies* VI:3 (1938), 186–193; Rowland, *The Art of Central Asia*, 107.

20. P. Bernard, "Note sur la signification historique de la trouvaille," *Revue numismatique*, 6e série, XVII (Paris 1975), 67–69.

21. G. Yazdani, *Ajanta* IV (London/New York/Bombay 1955), 106; R.J. Gettens, "The Materials in the Wall Paintings from Kizil in Chinese Turkestan," *Technical Studies* VI:4 (1938), 281–294.

22. A. von Le Coq, *Die buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien* III, *Die Wandmalereien* (Berlin 1924), 8, 18.

23. Ibid.

24. A greyish green has been found on the fragment from *Panjikent II: G and D*, border above the *ṣuffa*, and in some of the details from the murals from *Panjikent VI:1*, see Kostrov, *Skul'ptura*, 161. It is of interest that the green pigment used in the murals of the "small" hall at Shahristan, Ustrushana, was not a mixed color, but malachite, which was evidently accessible in this eastern Sogdian province, see N. N. Negmatov, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov Ustrushany," *SA* 3 (1973), 188.

appears only in mixture with lemon yellow orpiment that yields the grey green color occasionally found in some of the later paintings. Elsewhere, the total absence of the color green in the paintings from Panjikent (but present in the murals from Shahristan) is compensated by the subtle juxtaposition of other colors of contrasting and varied saturation. The effectiveness of this type of substitution is evidenced by the very avoidance of the mixed green derived from indigo blue which was evidently available in Sogdiana in sufficiently large quantities as to have been exported to China.[25]

In India, on the other hand, indigo blue (*nīla*) rather than the precious natural ultramarine (*rājāvarta*) was in general use. Sogdian painters generally repeated an Indian practice in their use of a mixed green. In Indian painting green was a secondary color that was obtained from the admixture of indigo blue and a yellow color (*pīta*), usually orpiment (*haritāla*).[26] Despite its variety, the Indian painter's palette was also subject to the limitations of local resources. Thus blue is altogether excluded from the eight colors of Singhalese painting from Sīgiriya (ca. fifth to sixth centuries). The richer color range in the paintings from Bādāmī and Ajanta included a series of greens, blues and a violet. In the Bāgh paintings lapis lazuli blue was used more extensively than at Ajanta. In the Jaina paintings from Sittanvāsal a muted green was added to the usual palette.[27]

Symbolic Use of Color

In at least three instances in the murals from Panjikent where blue pigment is used to define exposed flesh, color can be said to have served a symbolic function. In all three instances, the color blue is associated with the flesh of individuals whose attributes and iconography indicate their supernatural status. *Panjikent VI:8, north wall*, preserves part of a knee, hip and torso of a naked male figure, colored blue and represented in a dancing position. Near the image are figures of kneeling worshippers painted in naturalistic flesh tones. A second mural, from *Panjikent VII, niche*, also represents the figure of a blue male dancer shown wearing strings of bells and an animal skin around the hips. *Panjikent XXII:1, niche* (fig. 5), contains a partially preserved torso of the Sogdian god *Wyšprkr* depicted in armor and shown with three heads and six arms (see above, p. 29f.). The leonine and demoniac left

25. In 717 the rulers of Samarkand reportedly sent quantities of indigo blue pigment to China, see E.H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand, a Study of T'ang Exotics* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1963), 208, 212.

26. Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, 47–49.

27. J. Auboyer, *Arts et styles de l'Inde* (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1951), 109–110; J.P. Vogel, in Sir John Marshall et al., *The Bagh Caves* (London 1927), 48.

head of this figure is colored blue. In all three instances the color blue is intentionally used to describe a symbolic property of the divinity depicted. Belenitskii has associated the blue flesh color of these images with Śaivite and Tantric iconographic formulae which were ultimately developed in India.[28] Whereas in the first two murals noted above the blue flesh color is associated with a human figure of doubtless supernatural qualities, in the third example the blue color is reserved only for the demoniac head on the tricephalic god whose human heads are colored in a natural light flesh tone. In this instance, therefore, generally demoniac qualities are expressed by the use of the blue flesh color.

The symbolic use of the blue flesh color and the iconographic traits that accompany it in the three murals from Panjikent cited above testify to the ultimate influence of Indian artistic models. In India the symbolic use of color may be dated at least to the fourth century when Bharata enumerated the conventional colors of the sentiments in the *Nāṭyaśāstra.*[29] The expression of sentiment (*rasa*) by a definite flesh color in Indian painting followed the practice established in Indian drama where cosmetic colors (*prastara*) conveyed the specific emotional states of the actors. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* demanded that the painter express the nine sentiments used in drama (*navanāṭyarasa*) to convey corresponding emotions in the representational arts.[30] The *Nāṭyaśāstra* defines eight sentiments derived from four "original" ones. The four "original" sentiments, e.g., *erotic, furious, heroic,* and *odious,* produce respective comic, pathetic, marvelous, and terrible sentiments. These sentiments are expressed by definite colors and associated with specific (presiding) deities in the following order:[31]

Erotic: blue (*śyāma*),[32] associated with Viṣṇu.
Comic: white, associated with the Pramathas.
Furious: red, associated with Rudra.
Pathetic: grey (*kapota*), associated with Yama.
Heroic: yellowish white, luminous (*gaura*),[33] associated with Indra.

28. A.M. Belenitskii, "Iz istorii kul'turnykh sviazei Srednei Azii i Indii v rannem srednevekov'e," *KSIA* 98 (1964), 37f.

29. *The Nāṭyaśāstra, a Treatise on Ancient Indian Dramaturgy and Histrionics Ascribed to Bharata-Muni* I, transl. by Manomohan Ghosh, 2d ed. (Calcutta 1967), 38ff.

30. Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, 50.

31. *The Nāṭyaśāstra,* op. cit.

32. The term *śyāma* here refers to blue which is a primary color, see Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, 48. It should not be translated as green which is a mixed color in the Indian context quoted, cf. Manomohan Ghosh, *The Nāṭyaśāstra*, 108, no. VI:42.

33. Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, 59, 86.

Marvelous: yellow, associated with Brahmā.
Odious: blue, associated with Śiva.
Terrible: black, associated with Kāla.

The earliest example of the symbolic use of blue for flesh color in Indian painting is preserved in the Bāgh paintings dated to the fifth or sixth century.[34] A bluish green shade is used for flesh tints in certain individuals in the paintings from Bādāmi[35] (sixth century), and an ultramarine blue is used as a flesh color in the twelfth century Indra-Sabha temple (cave 33), at Ellora.[36] The use of symbolic flesh tints on stone images from Indian shrines testifies to the currency of this convention in Indian art, even if the examples preserved in Indian painting are sporadic and of relatively late date.[37]

At Bāmiyān the use of the blue body color is combined with nuances of dress and ornament that suggest a specific ethnic type.[38] But this descriptive use of flesh color is abandoned in the murals from Qyzyl where differences in flesh color are arbitrary and unaccompanied by variations in dress and ornament.[39]

The use of the blue flesh color in the three murals from Panjikent, cited above, is neither descriptive nor ornamental. It is rather a reference to the divine or demoniac quality of the image and is based on the symbolic use of color that had been developed in Indian painting.[40]

The Sketch

In Sogdian painting, as in other traditions of Asian art, the quality of the sketch or outline to a large extent determines the ultimate merit of the work of art. In the list of the stylistic criteria of Indian art of the seventh century recorded in the

34. Sir John Marshall et al., *The Bagh Caves in the Gwalior State* (London 1927), pl. B.

35. S. Kramrisch, "Paintings at Bādāmi," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* IV:1 (Calcutta 1936), 58; Auboyer, *Arts et styles de l'Inde*, 109–110. For the dates of Bādāmi 1, 2 and 3, see W. Spink, *Ajanta to Ellora* (Bombay, n.d.), 4–10.

36. S. Kramrisch, *A Survey of Painting in the Deccan* (London 1937), 81; D.V. Thomson, "Preliminary Notes on Some Early Hindu Painting at Ellora," *Rupam* 26 (1928), 48.

37. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography* I:1 (Madras 1916), 52–54.

38. J. Hackin, J. Carl, *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Bāmiyān*, *MDAFA* III (Paris 1933), 12–13, pls. XVI–XVII, figs. 17–18.

39. Ibid.

40. For a different use of color symbolism in Zoroastrian and Manichaean cosmologies, see H.S. Nyberg, "Questions de cosmogonie et cosmologie mazdéenes," *Journal Asiatique* 219 (1931), 218–220. The rainmaker of the Sogdian magical text from the Stein Collection in the British Museum addresses the wind as one bedecked in red, see E. Benveniste, *Textes sogdiens* III, *Mission Pelliot en Asie Centrale* (Paris 1940), 60; cf. W.B. Henning, "The Sogdian Texts of Paris," *BSOAS* XI:4 (1946), 713–740.

Viṣṇudharmottara the role of the sketch is accorded highest priority.[41] In Sogdian painting the sketch was executed in two separate stages. A preliminary sketch defined the outlines of the forms and their inner details directly on the plaster to which the local colors were then added; and a final sketch reasserted the original outlines and linear details of the forms over the local colors. The artist sometimes entered slight alterations in the final outlines which are revealed by discrepancies between the two layers of contours, as seen on the fragment showing two heads represented in profile found in a heap of plaster on the floor in *Panjikent VI: 13*.

Sogdian painters evidently sketched without recourse to mechanical devices for the duplication of figures. The repetition of stock scenes and figures, such as that prescribed in the Indian Śilpa texts and found in the paintings from Ajanta, was probably not demanded of the Sogdian artist who catered to the primarily secular and varied interests of the Sogdian feudal aristocracy rather than to the sectarian concerns of a religious community. The use of pounced drawing, prescribed in the Indian manuals on painting[42] and current in Buddhist art even in areas as distant from India as the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, at Tun-huang,[43] is not recorded in Sogdian painting.

The preliminary sketch in the earlier group of paintings from Panjikent is painted in a watery brown pigment which is strengthened in the final contour by darker brown and black pigments.[44] In the later Sogdian paintings the colors of both the preliminary and final contours are varied in intensity according to the texture of the form to which they give definition. Thus the black contours of a heavy fabric may be interrupted by lighter outlines of exposed flesh or the filmy silhouette of delicate blossoms.[45] Variations in texture are also conveyed by the modulation of the brush strokes. Thus in the detail from the north wall of *Panjikent III: 7* showing a bare foot on a patterned rug, the quality of the sharp and continuous outline of the foot contrasts clearly with the thin, short and transparent strokes that end in compact clots of pigment in the white network pattern on the

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41. Gunasinghe, *La technique de la peinture indienne*, 39.

42. Ibid., 36, 38, n. 2; Madanjeet Singh, *Ajanta*, 61.

43. F.H. Andrews, *Catalogue of Wall-Paintings from Ancient Shrines in Central Asia and Sistān* (Delhi 1933), vi, pl. I. The preliminary sketch in *Panjikent III: 17* was incised on the plaster (see *Zhivopis'*, 182–183) in a linear manner that has little to do with pounced drawings in which dots, punched through the paper drawing on the plaster wall, provide guidelines for the reproduction of the drawing in pigments.

44. Kostrov, in *Zhivopis'*, 185ff.

45. Ibid., 164, 176.

rug.[46] Furthermore, a harmony between the thematic content of a given scene and its formal expression may be intentionally produced by purely linear means even within a single cycle of paintings. Thus the graceful figure of the harpist, depicted as an attendant of the divine image on the south wall of *Panjikent VI:1* (pl. 28), is delineated in meandering and curvilinear outlines that attract and hold the attention of the viewer. By contrast, the sharp and angular outlines of the following battle scenes, as observed by Kostrov, provide for a rapid transition of the eye to the subsequent episode in the continuous band of interacting figures around the walls.[47]

Occasionally the hand of a great draftsman imparts extraordinary vitality and force to even minor and incidental forms. Thus the sweeping outlines of the floriate duck, depicted as a textile pattern on the dress of a fallen warrior in the so-called "Amazon" cycle from *Panjikent XXI:1*, (pl. 14), convey the extraordinary boldness and flourish that distinguish the hand of the master of this grandly staged cycle of combat scenes. The fluent brush and expressive forms of this master are particularly striking in the smaller panel compositions arranged at the base of the main frieze in this cycle (fig. 54).[48] The spatial limitations imposed by the small rectangular frame, and the restricted palette, become positive factors that enhance the narrative clarity and dramatic intensity of the scenes.

A very different artistic sensibility is expressed in the monumental banquet scene from *Panjikent XXIV*, in which the artist builds up his shapes in short, irregular and overly refined strokes (fig. 17). Details such as the blossoms, sprouting branches and facial features emerge from a mass of modulated strokes of varied color and intensity. The groping outline and exquisite delicacy of the brush of this painter contrast sharply with the incisive and vigorous strokes of the master of the "Amazon" cycle in the murals from *Panjikent XXI:1* (pls. 14–20). In the works of these two masters, who may well have been contemporaries in the later school of painting at Panjikent, are thus met two very different realizations of the descriptive and expressive potential of the outline.

46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., 152ff.
48. Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 24ff., figs. 14–15.

6. Continuity of Tradition: The Sogdian Artistic Heritage in Muslim Painting

In the absence of examples of Islamic book painting datable to the first centuries of the Muslim era, investigators have often turned to textual references and remote *comparanda* for a reconstruction of the genesis of Arab miniature painting.

As an early advocate of the theory of Byzantine and Sasanian origins of Arab painting, Sir Thomas Arnold looked to East Christian book painting from Syria and Manichaean miniatures from Turfan for the vehicles through which Late Antique and Persian influences were transmitted to Muslim painting.[1] However, chronological discrepancies and subsequent iconographic studies have weakened the early arguments for Syrian Jacobite and Manichaean influences on early Islamic miniature painting.[2] Nevertheless, the unsettled question of the stylistic influence of Manichaean miniatures from Turfan on Islamic painting haunts the historian of Islamic painting even in current studies.[3]

1. Sir Thomas W. Arnold, *Survivals of Sasanian and Manichaean Art in Persian Painting* (Oxford 1924); idem, *Painting in Islam, a Study of the Place of Pictorial Art in Muslim Culture* (Oxford 1928), 2d ed. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965), 52ff.; idem, *The Old and New Testaments in Muslim Religious Art*, Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1928 (London 1932); idem, "The Pictorial Art of the Jacobite and Nestorian Churches," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 30 (1929–30), 595–597; idem, "Book Painting. The Origins," *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* III, ed. A.U. Pope (London/New York 1939), 1809–1819.

2. L. Binyon, J.V.S. Wilkinson, B. Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting, Including a Critical and Descriptive Catalogue of the Miniatures Exhibited at Burlington House, January–March 1931, London 1933*, 2d ed. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), 23; H. Buchthal, "The Painting of the Syrian Jacobites in Its Relation to Byzantine and Islamic Art," *Syria* XX (1939), 136–150; idem, "Hellenistic Miniatures in Early Islamic Manuscripts," *Ars Islamica* VII:2 (1940), 125–133; idem, "Early Islamic Miniatures from Baghdad," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* V (Baltimore 1942), 16–39.

3. F. Cumont, "Māni et les origines de la miniature persane," *Revue Archéologique* XXIII (1913), 82–86; B. Denike, *Zhivopis' Irana* (Moskva 1938), 23ff.; U. Monneret de Villard, "Book Painting. Manichaean Relations," *A Survey of Persian Art* III, 1820–1828; E. Kühnel, *Miniaturmalerei im*

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The present chapter addresses the question of the so-called Manichaean stylistic contributions to Islamic painting in light of new evidence obtained from the Sogdian murals.

Arnold's theory of a stylistic connection between Islamic art and Manichaean painting rested on the similarity between some of the artistic conventions found in the Muslim miniatures and those considered peculiar to the Manichaean miniatures, datable to about the ninth century, discovered by the German archaeological expedition to the Turfan oasis in Eastern Turkestan.[4] These conventions consisted of a lotus-shaped motif, and a distinctive treatment of drapery folds.[5]

Since Arnold's study, the lotus-shaped floral motif has been noted in various related forms in the minor arts of Central Asia where they were perpetuated into Islamic times.[6] A version of this motif is depicted in the rug pattern on the throne of a ruler represented on a Sogdian silver plate, now attributable to the eighth or ninth century, in the Hermitage Museum, in Leningrad.[7] Despite its late date, the composition of this plate shows a return to the Sasanian theme of the royal banquet by Sogdian artists of the early Muslim age. This trend is observed in other Sogdian works of art of this period as demonstrated by a second Sogdian silver plate in the Hermitage Museum that repeats the familiar Sasanian theme of the royal hunt[8] (fig. 61). These two Sogdian representations contain, furthermore, the second stylistic convention which Arnold had attributed to the tradition of Manichaean painting known from Turfan.[9]

The garments of the figures depicted on these post-Sasanian Sogdian dishes show a capelike collar that is draped over the shoulders and chest in heavy folds that terminate in double spiral shapes. The same spiral folds are found on the hemlines of the jacket and on the skirts of the figures on the two dishes. The cape and

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islamischen Orient (Berlin 1923), 18ff.; idem, *Persische Miniaturmalerei* (Berlin 1959), 7–8; Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (Editions d'Art Albert Skira 1961), 14–15.

4. See above, note 1; A. von Le Coq, *Chotscho, Facsimile-Wiedergaben der wichtigeren Funde der ersten königlich preussischen Expedition nach Turfan in ost-Turkestan, Ergebnisse der kgl. preussischen Turfan-Expeditionen* (Berlin 1913); idem, *Die buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien* II, *Die manichäischen Miniaturen* (Berlin 1923).

5. Arnold, *Survivals of Sasanian and Manichaean Art in Persian Painting*, 18ff.

6. B.I. Marshak, *Sogdiiskoe serebro, ocherki po vostochnoi torevtike*, Kul'tura narodov Vostoka, Akademiia nauk SSSR, Otdelenie istorii institut Vostokovedeniia gosudarstvennyi Ėrmitazh (Moskva 1971), cf. pattern on the Sogdian silver dishes shown on fig. 13ff.

7. Ibid., 118–121, T31, fig. 20.

8. Ibid., 118–121, T30.

9. Arnold, *Survivals of Sasanian and Manichaean Art in Persian Painting*, 18ff.

Figure 61. A royal hunt depicted on a Sogdian silver vessel of the early Muslim period, in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. Sketch after Marshak, Sogdiiskoe serebro, *pl. 30.*

double-spiral folds of the figures on the Sogdian dishes are anticipated in the pre-Islamic art of Sogdiana exemplified by a Sogdian panel composition from *Panjikent VI:41* (fig. 55). These Sogdian conventions are ultimately derived from the more naturalistic idiom of the Graeco-Iranian artistic style that provided the basis for the treatment of drapery in some of the earliest representations from Panjikent (cf. the overblouse and its regular folds on the two-armed goddess with a banner, from the northern precincts of *Temple II*, at Panjikent, fig. 34). The double-spiral folds and the cape appear for the first time in the Islamic art of the Near East at Samarra, in the ninth century.[10] The heavy concentric folds of the garments of the two dancers in the ʿAbbasid mural from Samarra are characteristic for the Samarra wall paintings, and appear there in the representations of a hunter or huntress shown grappling with prey.[11]

10. E. Herzfeld, *Die Ausgrabungen von Samarra* III, *Die Malereien von Samarra* (Berlin 1927), pl. II (dancers from the Jausaq, Harem). According to Ettinghausen, "The arched curls, shaved corners of the coiffure, the long braids and wide collars, have eastern parallels in the Sassanian minor arts and in the Turfan frescoes," See *Arab Painting*, 42.

11. Herzfeld, *Die Ausgrabungen von Samarra* III, pl. VI, "huntress" from the Jausaq, Harem.

Figure 62. Manichaean angels from a detail of a Turfanese scroll with a Sogdian text, datable to A.D. *ninth–tenth century. Museum für indische Kunst, the State Museum, Berlin. Ca. 22 × 21 cm.*

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By contrast to the clarity and simplicity of the heavy concentric folds on the legs and abdomen of the Samarra figures, drapery folds in Manichaean paintings of the ninth century from Turfan are elaborated into complicated knots and delicate ribbons. The garments of the two Manichaean angels, represented on a Turfanese scroll with a Sogdian text, in Berlin, are rendered by means of ribbons and light swirls of cloudlike folds that curl up at the hemlines[12] (fig. 62). The Turfanese drapery convention, as exemplified by this miniature, has incorporated Central Asian as well as Chinese stylistic traits that are absent from the artistic style of Samarra. The shredded and loosely knotted drapery style of the Manichaean miniature is standardized in Turfanese murals where it is reduced to rigid concentric bands arranged in antithetic oval-shaped forms on the sleeves of some figures, as found in the representation of the Tantric goddess in New

12. Le Coq, *Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien* II, pl. 3, cf. also pls. 5: e, 8; idem, *Chotscho*, pl. 3.

Figure 63. Turfanese mural depicting a Tantric goddess, ca. A.D. *ninth century. The Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi. Photo courtesy Josephine Powell.*

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Delhi (fig. 63), and in that of the kneeling male figure with a burner, in Berlin.[13]

The ultimate prototype for the Turfanese drapery convention may be sought in the playful experimentation with drapery effects occasionally noted in Sogdian painting. The garments of the seated banqueters on the chapel wall from *Panjikent XVI: 10* (pls. 29–30), are rendered by means of concentric bands of light drapery swirls that translate the loose folds on the sleeves and legs into semi-abstract patterns.

A rather mechanical repetition of such semi-abstract folds combined with the influence of Chinese art distinguishes the treatment of drapery in the ninth century art of Turfan from that of Samarra. The "scroll" or vermicular folds that appear in Arab painting in the late twelfth century continue the Turfan style in the cloudlike swirls and ripples that produce an all-over pattern, as found on the frontispiece of the *Book of Songs* (*kitāb al-aghānī*), in Istanbul, attributed to the north Mesopotamian School of Mosul.[14] The final stage in the development of the "scroll" or vermicular fold in Islamic art is found in the standardized versions of it in later Arab miniatures of the Mosul, Baghdad and Mamluk Schools where the folds have a metallic appearance (cf. the frontispiece of the fourteenth century miniature from al-Harīrī's *Assemblies* [*maqāmāt*], probably painted in Egypt, now in the Vienna Nationalbibliothek).[15] The vermicular folds of drapery depicted in the *kitāb al-aghānī* frontispiece miniature and elsewhere in Islamic miniatures produce the effect of surface fluctuations of sheer silk, occasionally used to suggest other surfaces such as water or tree bark. The model for the representation of such vermicular folds is not found in Sasanian art, as Bishr Farès supposed, but in the method of shading in reverse found in paintings from Turfan and China.[16]

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13. M. Bussagli, *Painting of Central Asia* (Editions d'Art Albert Skira 1963), 102 (kneeling male figure); M. Bussagli, C. Sivaramamurti, *5000 Years of Art of India* (New York, n.d.), fig. 177 (Tantric figure); Le Coq, *Chotscho*, pl. 34 (Tantric goddess), pls. 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24.

14. D.S. Rice, "The Aghānī Miniatures and Religious Painting in Islam," *Burlington Magazine* 95 (1953), 128–234; Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, 64. The miniatures from this manuscript were attributed to a Persian school by A.S. Melikian Chirvani, "Trois manuscrits de l'Iran seljoukide," *Arts Asiatiques* XVI (1967), 3–33. Against this attribution, see G. Azarpay, A.D. Kilmer, "The Eclipse Dragon on an Arabic Frontispiece-Miniature," *JAOS* 98:4 (1978), 369.

15. H. Buchthal, "The Painting of the Syrian Jacobites in Its Relation to Byzantine and Islamic Art," *Syria* XX (1939), 146f.; Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, 148.

16. The use of the rippled drapery effect in Islamic miniature painting was seen by Ettinghausen as a reflection of the influence of inlaid metalwork, see *Arab Painting*, 64. Bishr Farès derived it from the wrinkled drapery patterns of Sasanian art, see "Une miniature religieuse de l'école arabe de

This drapery style and the Mongoloid facial type with stringy braids and full Turkish dress appear simultaneously in the art of the Near East under the patronage of the Seljuqs and other Turkish dynasties in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Although the moon-shaped face and Mongoloid features occur in exceptional

Figure 64. Male figure painted on a pillar from the Ghaznavid palace at Lashkari Bāzār, Afghanistan, datable to A.D. *eleventh century. The Archaeological Museum, Kabul. Height of head ca. 18 cm. Photo courtesy Josephine Powell.*

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Bagdad," *Mémoires de l'Institut d'Égypte* LI (Le Caire 1948), 56. The use of arbitrary shading in Chinese art was evidently inspired by effects of plastic modeling introduced to China from the arts of India and Central Asia. The use of shading in reverse in Chinese art of the T'ang period is exemplified by Buddhist murals and painted silks from Tun-huang, see L. Sickman, A. Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China* (Penguin Books 1956), 65A, 66. However, the technique apparently went back to the Han period when "the western manner" of painting was introduced to China, see M. Sullivan, *The Birth of Landscape Painting* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1962), 38.

cases in Islamic art as early as the ninth century, as at Nishapur, Turkish dress and accoutrements and the Mongoloid facial type are the rule in the art of areas controlled by Turkish dynasties, as demonstrated by the murals from the royal palace at Lashkari Bāzār, built by the Ghaznavids in the eleventh century (fig. 64). The trend found in the Islamic world in the tenth and eleventh centuries was anticipated in the art of Transoxiana where Turkish habits of dress, accoutrements and the Mongoloid facial type were introduced in the wake of Turkish political expansion from the seventh century.[17] Sogdian murals of the late seventh century from Panjikent and Samarkand (figs. 51–52), associated with the reigns of Chakin Chur Bilga and Vargoman, demonstrate the adoption of the somewhat Mongoloid facial type and Turkish arms and articles of dress. However, the adoption of these features which reflect changes in fashion associated with the new political power in Central Asia did not affect the form and content of Sogdian art. Sogdian art followed a consistent pattern of development down to the Muslim conquest. The refinement of the continuous pictorial narrative and the perfection of its artistic idiom in the early eighth century reflect the continuity of Sogdian ideological, social and cultural patterns in urban and agrarian communities.

Early Islamic murals have not so far yielded evidence of borrowing from the Sogdian tradition of the pictorial epic. Despite the stylistic relationship between the Lashkari Bāzār murals and Sogdian paintings of the pre-Islamic period, observed by Oleg Grabar, the purely courtly and ceremonial content of the Ghaznavid murals place them strictly within the cultural and socio-political context of the early Islamic world.[18]

A connection between Arab painting of the twelfth to fourteenth century and Sasanian art has been generally assumed for the heraldic and symmetrical compositions that depict courtly scenes in Arab painting.[19] By contrast to the rigid sym-

17. K. Holter, "Die Galen-Handschrift und die Makamen des Harīri der Wiener Nationalbibliothek," *Jahrbuch des kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 11:2 (Wien 1937), 11; K. Otto-Dorn, "Türkisch-islamisches Bildgut in den Figurenreliefs von Achthamar," *Anatolia* VI (1961–62), 1–69; eadem, *L'Art de l'Islam*, L'Art dans le monde (Paris 1964), 133f.; M. Rosen-Ayalon, "The Problem of the 'Bagdad School' of Miniatures and Its Connections with Persia," *Israel Oriental Studies* III (Tel-Aviv 1973), 159–171. For the "moon-shaped" face in the murals from Lashkari Bāzār and Nishapur, see D. Schlumberger, "Le palais ghaznévide de Lashkari Bazar," *Syria* XXIX (1952), 261f.; C.K. Wilkinson, "The Īrānian Expedition, 1937, the Museum's Excavations at Nīshapūr," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* XXXIII:11 (1938), 9f., figs. 7–9, 17 (head from Sabz Pūshān).

18. O. Grabar, "The Visual Arts," *The Cambridge History of Iran* 4 (Cambridge 1975), 359.

19. Bishr Farés, "Distinction des deux tendences syrienne et iranienne dans la miniature de l'école de Baghdad," *Actes du XXIe Congrès international des Orientalistes* (Paris 1949), 332–333.

metry and tightly controlled compositions of the courtly scenes, representations of daily life and folkore in Arab painting have relatively loose compositional schemes, and display an interest in spontaneous action and incidental detail that has been attributed to a native Arab origin. These two types of compositions are frequently juxtaposed in the same miniature, as shown by the text-miniatures of the *Book of Antidotes* (*kitāb al-diryāq*), in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and on the frontispiece of a slightly later version of the same text in Vienna.[20] Some investigators have noted that whereas courtly scenes such as those depicted in the frontispieces of the Mesopotamian school might be regarded as expressions of the aspirations of the Seljuq aristocracy, representations of low life and folklore in the same manuscripts responded to popular demand.[21] This tendency was apparently absent in early Islamic painting from Persia under Turkish patronage.[22] Nor was it found in Sasanian Persia where the official court style prevailed until the Muslim conquest. However, a dichotomy of the sort found in Arab painting is observed in the Sogdian juxtapositions of hieratic images of divinities and the continuous pictorial epic. This dichotomy in Sogdian painting is explained by the differences in the functions of the two compositional types. A similar explanation may be entertained for the juxtaposition of the hieratic courtly scenes and the looser compositions of genre scenes in Arab painting.

Although the Sogdian continuous pictorial epic finds no known reflections in Islamic murals, Sogdian representations of fables and folklore, depicted as small panel compositions, find formal and thematic ties with Arab miniature painting.

20. Bishr Farès, *Le livre de la Thériaque*, *Art islamique* II (Le Caire 1953); Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, 85, 91; see also A.S. Melikian Chirvani, "Trois manuscrits de l'Iran seljoukide," *Arts Asiatiques* XVI (1967), 3–51; Azarpay, Kilmer, "The Eclipse Dragon on an Arabic Frontispiece-Miniature," op. cit. For other instances of the occurrence of princely themes in Arab painting, see O. Grabar, "The Bourgeoisie and the Arts," *The Islamic City, a Colloquium*, *Papers on Islamic History* I, ed. A.H. Hourani, S.M. Stern (Oxford 1970), 219–220.

21. Grabar, "The Bourgeoisie and the Arts"; Rosen-Ayalon, "The Problem of the 'Baghdad School' of Miniatures and Its Connection with Persia," 169–170.

22. A.S. Melikian-Chirvani, "Le roman de Varqe et Golšāh," *Arts Asiatiques* XXII (1970), 39f., 97f.; Z. Ṣafa, *Varqah va-Gulshāh-i 'Ayyūqī* (Teheran 1964), 6. The miniatures from the thirteenth century Persian Varqa and Golšāh manuscript in Istanbul appear to belong to a regional style perhaps from the area around Khoy, the artist's home town in northwestern Iran. In his valuable and detailed analysis of the Varqa and Golšāh miniatures, Melikian-Chirvani concentrated on the identification of what he believed to be Persian traits in these miniatures. The miniatures, however, are permeated by Turkish patterns of dress, accoutrement, gesture and facial type. The overwhelming impression gained from these miniatures is of an eclectic school that translated Mesopotamian, Turkish and Persian patterns according to the limited and prescribed canons of a regional school.

The lowermost register on the wall of the hall that yielded the "Rustam cycle" (*Panjikent VI: 41*) (pls. 10, 12, 13) is divided into small panels that depict independent scenes of daily life and familiar fables identified by their excavator, Belenitskii, as illustrations of tales from the Indian *Pañcatantra*.[23] These tales were translated into Pahlavi by Bidpāi, and subsequently from the Persian into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca. 759) as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. Such fables, as well as scenes of daily life, are depicted in small abbreviated panel compositions at the base of many of the major cycles of painting from Panjikent (pl. 25, figs. 54, 55) (cf. also *Panjikent XXI:* pl. 25, fig. 54, the dancers from *Panjikent VII: 2*, the wrestlers from *Panjikent XVII*). In such panel compositions, the story is often unfolded in a synoptic composition that includes all the basic elements of the tale and its moral. Thus in the fable about the man who slaughtered the goose that laid the golden egg, the story is broken down into three episodes that show first, the man with his goose and its golden egg, then, the slaughter of the goose, and finally, the man's remorse at the realization of his folly (*Panjikent XXI: 1*, pl. 25, fig. 54). In the story of the clever hare, familiar from the *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, the greedy lion is shown first, in conversation with the hare, and then in his fatal plunge into the well (*Panjikent XXI: 1*, fig. 54a). The illustrative clarity of this scene is recalled in the treatment of the same fable in the Arabic version of Ibn al-Muqaffa', represented in Arab miniatures of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries[24] (see above, p. 119).

The synoptic and self-contained compositions, eloquent gestures and economy of formal means that are characteristic for the Sogdian panel compositions distinguish this category of painting from the monumental friezes of epic or religious interest in Sogdian painting. The compositional and formal particulars of the small panel compositions would appear to link them rather with book painting. If these panel compositions are taken as an indication of the existence of a tradition of Sogdian miniature painting that accompanied some Sogdian written texts, then the Sogdian artistic style would have found a likely vehicle for its transference to the West. Only indirect material evidence, in the form of illustrated religious texts written in Sogdian, from Turfan, may be cited at this time in support of this argument.[25]

23. A.M. Belenitskii, V.I. Raspopova, *Drevnii Pendzhikent* (Dushanbe 1971), 21–22; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 18ff.

24. S. Walzer, "The Mamlūk Illuminated Manuscripts of Kalila wa-Dimna," *Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst*, ed. R. Ettinghausen (London 1959), 195–206.

25. Le Coq, *Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien* II, passim.

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It may be concluded from the foregoing study that some Sogdian stylistic patterns continued into Islamic times and contributed to the development, in the ninth century, of Islamic wall paintings at Samarra on the one hand, and the artistic school of Turfan on the other. Yet Sogdian contributions to Islamic art, it must be stressed, were more formal than substantive. Whereas the monumental aspect of the Sogdian pictorial frieze apparently did not affect the direction of early Islamic painting, secondary Sogdian paintings that depicted fables and folklore found ramifications in book painting of the Arab world. The popularity of such themes in Islamic times may be seen as an expression of socio-political conditions of the Arab world that was more receptive, understandably, to the secular appeal and universal humor of the genre than it was to the somber and patriotic mood of the Iranian epics. The popular view held in the 'Abbāsid age on the difference between fable and epic is reflected in the tale of Seyf-el-Muluk and Bedi'-el-Jemal from the *Thousand and One Nights* (nts. 756–778). The teller of this tale apparently compared his story to an epic when he agreed to tell it only on condition that "thou relate not this story in the beaten way; nor shalt thou relate it among women and slave-girls, nor among male black slaves and stupid persons, nor among boys; but thou shalt only recite it among emirs and kings and wezirs, and persons of knowledge, such as expositors and others."[26]

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26. E. W. Lane, *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* III (London 1914), 323–324.

7. Conclusion

To outline the conclusions drawn from the foregoing study of Sogdian painting it is necessary to return to the basic premises of this investigation. These centered around questions of the originality and independence of the Sogdian painting school, the particular stylistic traits and thematic objectives of that school, and its contribution to the traditions of miniature painting in the Islamic age.

The Graeco-Iranian artistic tradition of the new Iranian dynasties that had revitalized and given a new direction to the late Hellenistic art of Western and Central Asia had provided a rich foundation for the Sogdian tradition of painting (chapter 1). If the stylistic conventions of the Graeco-Iranian style were preserved with greater fidelity in the subsequent Buddhist art of Central Asia, traces of its content continued in the non-Buddhist art of Transoxiana. Thus the Sogdian funerary and ancestral cult betrays elements of the dynastic cults that flourished in the earlier Kushan, Khwarezmian and Parthian states in the early centuries of the Christian era (chapter 3). The earliest Sogdian school of wall painting, uncovered in the two public temple complexes at Panjikent, preserved also formal and iconographic links with the earlier Graeco-Iranian style (chapters 2–4). These formal and iconographic connections with the past are less evident in the later development of Sogdian art (Appendix), best known from murals of secular interest uncovered in the private residences of Sogdian city dwellers. The formulaic style that was gradually perfected in later Sogdian painting evidently responded to the distinctive quality of the secular themes that dominated the repertory of the Sogdian painter in the seventh and eighth centuries.

Murals of secular interest constitute by far the largest body of paintings uncovered in Sogdiana. The richness, diversity and prevalence of secular paintings prove that they served as a primary medium of artistic expression among Sogdians. Representations of narratives of heroic and epic content receive preferential treatment by their advantageous allocation on wall surfaces, their monumental

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dimensions, narrative continuity, and rich colors. With few exceptions, the content of such heroic narratives pertain to epic cycles that circulated in Sogdiana in pre-Islamic times. Like the oral poet of the heroic age, the Sogdian painter of the pictorial epic aimed for a clarity of expression and dramatic action. Again like the oral poet, he achieved these objectives through a selective use of a few compositional devices, and by the establishment of a given mood. Since interest centered on action, he developed a consistent language of gesture and proportion that heightened the drama and eloquence of his message (chapter 2).

Legendary and heroized individuals are frequently distinguished by specific marks and attributes. Such individuals receive divine support and are enveloped in "splendor." The format of the heroic epic is loosely followed in the representation of historic documentaries, in which priority is given to descriptive and realistic detail. Representations of Sogdian folktales and the genre, identified by their pedestrian content and formal conventions, played a secondary role in Sogdian painting where they were represented as a form of diversion along the lowermost section of the walls.

Themes of epic and secular interest are clearly distinguished by stylistic and iconographic formulae from religious imagery (chapters 2, 4). The religious imagery from the second temple at Panjikent suggests a synthesis of a native dynastic and ancestral cult and a Sogdian version of a funerary cult of Adonis. The Sogdian version of the goddess Nanā, a major goddess of Transoxiana, represented the latter as a superlative creative power who apparently combined the functions of the Mesopotamian Nanā with those of the Iranian earth goddess Ārmaiti. The iconography of this goddess clearly distinguishes her from a lesser goddess, a river deity depicted in a small chapel in the precincts of the second temple at Panjikent. The iconography of a male deity associated with the funerary cult in the second temple at Panjikent suggests his identification as the Iranian god Mithra. But the attributes of the latter figure, and his clearly funerary association, place the image in a closer relationship to Roman provincial models than to Kushan representations of that god. Besides references to gods of the native Iranian pantheon, later Sogdian paintings occasionally depict images of Tantric divinities that are represented according to Indian stylistic and iconographic conventions.

In the use of materials and techniques of painting the Sogdian murals display an economy and consistency that resulted from the limitations of native resources (chapter 5). By contrast to the opulent realism of contemporaneous Indian painting, the Sogdian style of painting is distinguished by its formal abstraction and a

modicum of descriptive detail. Compositional categories are there generally dictated by the thematic content of the painting. Thus whereas compositions of religious images are characterized by their monumental dimensions, hieratic scale and symmetry, ritual scenes and donor figures are relegated to smaller lateral friezes that often flank the divine image. Compositions of narratives of epic and heroic content are distinguished by the juxtaposition of a sequence of episodes arranged as a continuous frieze and frequently distributed within two or more superimposed registers (chapter 4). Folktales and genre scenes are generally relegated to small contiguous panel compositions arranged in the lowermost register on the walls.

The spatial integrity and relatively realistic proportions of the earlier paintings are gradually replaced in the later schools of Sogdian painting by a conceptual and two-dimensional space, hieratic scale, greater abstraction of the human form, and the establishment of definite standards of proportion and beauty (chapter 4). If the slender and elongated proportions of the human form are understood as a consequence of the evolution of the Sogdian artistic style and the establishment of native aesthetic standards, the slightly Mongoloid cast of the features of standard figures in later Sogdian painting must surely be seen as the reflection of the more cosmopolitan tastes of a later age when the Turks and the Chinese came to play leading political roles in the affairs of Sogdiana. However, in the pre-Islamic Sogdian "agro-city," the Turks never gained the monopoly of political power that they assumed in the post-ʿAbbasid period in Central Asia and the Near East. Turkish influence on Sogdian art is traceable only in details of dress, armor, and in the more or less Mongoloid physiognomy adopted in later Sogdian painting.[1] Despite evidence of increasing familiarity with other cultures and artistic patterns, Sogdian painters remained strictly bound within the confines of their own artistic canons. The world as envisioned through the highly selective artistic vocabulary of Sogdian painting corresponds to that portrayed in other media of expression in Sogdiana that record the ideological conceptions of a heroic age.

Finally, it is postulated that the secular and heroic pattern of Sogdian art provided later traditions with a viable alternative to the religious art of Buddhist India and Eastern Asia. Thus whereas Indian art found its ramifications in the Buddhist art of Eastern Turkestan and the Far East, the secular thrust of Sogdian art was more

1. A.H. Hourani, "The Islamic City in the Light of Recent Research," *The Islamic City, a Colloquium, Papers on Islamic History* I, ed. A.H. Hourani, S.M. Stern (Oxford 1970), 17; J. Aubin, "Éléments pour l'étude des agglomérations urbaines dans l'Iran medíéval," ibid., 69f.

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likely to find acceptance among artists of the Islamic world (chapter 6). It is ascertained that the arrival in the Islamic world of Turks who had assimilated Sogdian cultural patterns contributed to the transmission and distribution of Sogdian artistic conventions in the West. A more direct vehicle for the transmission of Sogdian artistic conventions may have existed in the form of Sogdian book painting, a reflection of which is found in the small panel compositions uncovered among the murals from Panjikent. The formal and substantive correspondence between the latter and later Arab book painting cannot be attributed to chance. Chance, as well as the perishable nature of painted manuscripts, played a role in creating the lacuna in the material evidence. Although there is little evidence to support the attribution to Transoxiana of a regional school of miniature painting datable to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,[2] questions still remain about the extent of the influence of Sogdian art on later traditions and about the media of its transmission to the West. The foregoing study offers merely preliminary and tentative thoughts on these questions.

2. For a review of the literature on the subject, see A. A. Ivanov, "Istoriia izucheniia Maverannakhrskoi (Sredneaziatskoi) shkoly miniatury," *Sredniaia Aziia v drevnosti i srednevekovye* (Moskva: AN SSSR, Institut Vostokovedeniia, 1977), 144–159.

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Appendix

The Classification of Sogdian Painting

The earliest known Sogdian murals have been uncovered within the confines of two temple precincts at Panjikent, dated on stratigraphic grounds to the beginning of the urban development of that town towards the end of the fifth century A.D.

The two temple complexes were situated within the northern part of the irregular fortified town (*shahristān*) of Panjikent, roughly between the ruler's citadel (*kuhandiz*) on the west (pl. 1), and the necropolis beyond the southern walls of the town (fig. 1). Excavated since 1947, the two contiguous temples are distinguished from the remains of the surrounding residential buildings by their larger dimensions, distinctive plan and ornamentation[1] (fig. 11).

The nucleus of each temple complex was a central tetrastyle hall oriented towards the east, with an adjoining enclosed sanctuary connected to its west, and a hexastyle *eivān* or portico to its east wall. The central tetrastyle hall in both temple complexes was surrounded on three sides by corridors or open galleries; it faced a large open courtyard on its fourth side. Surrounding walls and ancillary buildings defined the rectangular confines of each complex. *Temple II*, the larger of the two complexes, located immediately to the north of *Temple I*, has recently yielded evidence of extensive reconstruction in the seventh century when its surrounding walls were erected at the expense of an earlier shrine within its precincts (the north chapel). Both temples were apparently maintained and renovated throughout the life of the town, and were briefly occupied even after the Arab destruction of Panjikent in the latter part of the eighth century. The foundation of the central tetrastyle hall and its surrounding corridors in both *Temple I* and *Temple II* dates from the initial construction of the two complexes. However, the corridors of *Temple I* were subsequently converted into enclosed buildings, whereas those in *Temple II* preserved their original plan.

The fire that destroyed the temples in A.D. 722, at the time of the Arab campaign against Devashtich, ruler of Panjikent, preserved carbonized remains of wooden columns used in the *eivāns* and the tetrastyle halls. The four wooden columns of the tetrastyle halls evidently supported raftered or "lantern" roofs (cf. fig. 3) that covered the adobe brick structures. Brick vaults supported on walls built of blocks of beaten clay or adobe

1. A.M. Belenitskii, "O piandzhikentskikh khramakh," *KSIIMK* XLV (1952), 119–126; idem, "Raskopki sogdiiskikh khramov v 1948–1950 gg.," *MIA* 37 (1953), 21–58.

brick were generally used to roof passages or corridors. The mud plastered walls were usually decorated with murals that covered the entire wall surface and occasionally also the vaulted ceiling. The interiors of the niches that flanked the entrance to the enclosed sanctuary on the west walls of the tetrastyle halls were also decorated with murals. The murals preserved on the walls of the central tetrastyle hall and its adjoining *eivān* in *Temple II*, and those from an ancillary building within the *Temple I* complex, were evidently restored and repainted at subsequent periods within the life of the two temples.

In their association with the two oldest building complexes at Panjikent, the murals from *Temple I* and *Temple II* might be expected to represent the earliest preserved body of Sogdian wall painting at that site. The representation of the divine pair in the mural from Afrasiab, *Room 9*, is stylistically related to the sixth century murals from *Temple II* at Panjikent. An early seventh century date is suggested on stratigraphic grounds for *Panjikent VI:41–42* and *XXIII:26*. Historical and iconographic considerations suggest a date in the third quarter of the seventh century for the murals from Afrasiab, *Room 1*, and stratigraphic evidence suggests a date in the first quarter of the eighth century for the murals from the Panjikent citadel and for *Panjikent III* and *VII* (see *Part One*, pp. 46f., 37f.).

If the maintenance and later expansion of the two temples and their murals at Panjikent testify to the durability of the local cult, then the loss of murals from secular buildings of that early date may be attributed to the temporal function of domestic architecture. Indeed, the overriding sentiment that contributed to the preservation of the two public temples evidently did not extend to the maintenance of even private shrines that lasted only as long as the dwellings that housed them.

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The majority of the murals excavated in more than fifty rooms at Panjikent[2] is associated with buildings that functioned as private residences in the seventh and eighth centuries. Systematic and thorough catalogues of the paintings excavated at Panjikent prior to 1959 are offered in the two major publications compiled by A.IU. IAkubovskii in 1954, and by A.M. Belenitskii in 1959.[3] Some of the murals excavated in subsequent years are discussed in short reports by the excavators, others remain unpublished. It may be hoped, therefore, that a comprehensive catalogue of all the paintings uncovered since the last major publication on Panjikent can eventually be prepared by those who have immediate access to the material evidence from the excavations.

The murals listed below are arranged in the numerical order of the buildings in which they appear. The chronological sequence of the paintings discussed above is more fully documented in *Part One*, pp. 32–52f. by A.M. Belenitskii and B.I. Marshak. The murals are listed according to sector (Roman numeral), building number, and precise location within the building.

The list of murals from Panjikent is inclusive of the murals reported in publications. The list is by necessity selective and limited to major cycles and individual panels of

2. A. Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, Archaeologia Mundi (1968), 156f.
3. *Zhivopis'* (1954); *Skul'ptura* (1959).

unusual interest. This selectivity is dictated not only by the inherent interest of the examples listed, but also by their availability for study. The aim of this list is to provide a ready source of reference for examples quoted in the foregoing discussions on the technical, stylistic and thematic aspects of the Sogdian murals.

PANJIKENT I: EIVĀN

The principal hall and *eivān* of *Temple I* (fig. 11) preserved traces of murals that dated to the earliest building period in this temple complex. Shortly after the construction of the *eivān* of the temple in the sixth century, the murals in its north and south wings fell into disrepair and the temple underwent radical reconstruction. Excavations conducted in 1971 uncovered fragments of these early murals in the north and south wings of the *eivān* which evidently date to the sixth century (figs. 14, 25, 33). Those from the south wing comprised ceremonial scenes depicted in three registers of standing and seated men shown without their weapons. These figures, two of whom are identified by inscriptions that had been written next to them, are believed to represent portraits of donors or individuals who were instrumental in the construction of the temple and its decoration.[4] The south wing also contained mythological themes depicted on a larger scale than the ceremonial scenes, notable among which was the representation of a god in a boar-drawn chariot, confronted by a bridled but riderless horse (fig. 14). A conventional mountain landscape occupies the center of this composition and a border of "accordion" motifs defines its ground line.

The early murals from the north wing of this *eivān* also depicted mythological scenes, which in this instance could be identified as a reference to a story preserved by Firdausi in a later Persian form. The protagonist repeated in different episodes from the same story is here identified as Ḍaḥḥāk, identified by the pair of snakes that grow from his shoulders.[5]

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PANJIKENT I:5, NORTH WALL

This fragment originally decorated the north wall of a small unit built on the southern side of *Temple I*, discovered in 1949. It is a small section (1.5 × 0.5 m) of a larger mural that probably covered the entire wall surface and the interiors of the two niches in *I:5*.[6] The fragment depicts three male figures with frontal torsos and profile heads turned to the right towards a fourth larger figure represented in three-quarter view. The third figure from the left appears to hold a spiral-shaped object, representing a flaming torch,

4. For a report of the excavations conducted in the *eivān* of *Temple I* in 1971, see Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 55–57, figs. 3–4.

5. Ibid., A. Belenitskii, B. Marshak, "Stennye rospisi, obnaruzhennye v 1970 godu na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta," *SGÉ* XXXVI (1973), 58–61. The central tetrastyle hall in *Temple II* measured 8 × 10 m, the hexastyle *eivān* measured 20 m long, 5–6 m wide, the open courtyard was 75–80 m long and 60 m wide. The small sanctuary on the west end of the central tetrastyle hall in *Temple II* measured 7 × 4 m, and contained a continuous wall bench (*ṣuffa*) on its three enclosed sides, see Belenitskii, in *MIA* 37 (1953), 23.

6. See M.M. D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 103, n. 3, 104, pl. VI; P.I. Kostrov, in *Zhivopis'*, 183.

and is followed by a figure with a raised right hand turned towards his face. The object of the attention of the three figures is the larger figure on the right shown with shoulder flames, flaming corona and a black nimbus.

The painting was executed on a thick white plaster ground (the "alabaster" ground of the Russian sources) in a red preliminary sketch, filled in with colors. The modulated reddish color tones of the faces produce the effect of plastic modeling enhanced by the denser color of the shaded areas in the final contours of the figures. The profile heads are represented with black moustaches, straight black hair cut and gathered behind the ear-lobes, and frontal eyes.

PANJIKENT I:5, EAST NICHE

Small fragment decorated with a fleur-de-lis motif inscribed in a roundel of alternating circles and leaf-shaped motifs.[7]

PANJIKENT I:10, EAST WALL

Building 10, a small unit on the north side of the *Temple I* court, is a small and simplified version of the central tetrastyle hall with four columns, here reduced to two. Two super-imposed layers of painting were discovered on the east wall of *I:10*. The first layer showed a bearded frontal head of a haloed man, executed on a white plaster ground (*Panjikent I:10P*).[8] The second, or top layer of painting on the east wall was part of a larger composition that spanned the entire east and north walls. Three frontal figures seated in a cross-legged position, with bearded heads in three-quarter view (1.8 × 1.6 m), are painted on a white plaster ground. The absence of the effect of plastic modeling distinguishes these figures and the two on the north wall of the same room[9] from those depicted in the wall painting from *Panjikent I:5*.

PANJIKENT I:10, NORTH WALL

The two seated figures on the west pier of the north wall (1.1 × 1.4 m),[10] like the three from the east wall, are associated with the sacrificial scene depicted on the east pier of the north wall (1.3 × 1.6 m)[11] (fig. 48). The sacrificial altar is here tended by a priest and five attendants sketched in black outlines on a red ground. The limited color range of this scene contrasts with the rich palette of the row of cross-legged figures on the west pier of the north wall and on the east wall. Yet the two groups are connected in style and iconography. An ornamental border consisting of interwoven rectangular shapes decorated the upper limit of the mural on the north wall of *Building 10*.[12]

7. V.L. Voronina, "Arkhitekturniye pamiatniki drevnego Piandzhikenta," *MIA* 37 (Moskva/Leningrad 1953), figs. 1, 21.
8. D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 106, pl. XIII.
9. D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 104–106, pls. VII, X, XII.
10. Ibid., pls. VII, IX.
11. Ibid., pls. VII–VIII.
12. Ibid., pl. XI.

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PANJIKENT I: 10A, NORTH WALL

The small enclosed room (3.5 × 1 m) that opened into the north side of *I:10* contained traces of painting on its north wall. The male dancers and musicians depicted on this fragment (0.3 × 0.5 m) were treated in a linear and two-dimensional style on a white plaster ground, as in the murals from the adjoining building *I:10*.[13]

PANJIKENT I: 14, FROM A HEAP ON THE FLOOR

This fragment depicts a man's head in a linear and flat style executed on a white plaster ground colored blue.[14]

PANJIKENT II: NORTHERN PRECINCT, EAST WALL OF CHAPEL

This small chapel, situated in the northern part of the *Temple II* courtyard, was part of a complex that was bricked over at the beginning of the sixth century by the masonry of a later wall (fig. 11). Excavations conducted in 1970 revealed murals on the walls of the small chapel which was presumably constructed in the fifth century, after the completion of the *eivān* and the central tetrastyle hall of *Temple II*. Unlike the earliest murals from the *Temple II* sanctuary which had not preserved traces of a plaster primecoat, those from the northern chapel preserved evidence of the use of the plaster primecoat in these fifth century murals. The central figure in this mural was a crowned and haloed woman seated on a throne supported by a winged dog-headed creature, and attended by a smaller standing (male?) figure on her left. The enthroned figure is represented with a banner in her left, and a crown (?) with ribbons in her right hand. The right hand is placed next to a musical instrument in the shape of a rectangular frame with bell attachments (fig. 34). After a lacuna of 1.5 m, this scene is followed by the representation of four standing beardless male donors (figs. 23–24), and a fragment of a figure on a lion throne.[15] An accordion pattern decorates the lower border of the donor frieze. The profiles of the donors, their dress, and the effect of plastic modeling produced by the use of shading and highlights on the face of the enthroned female figure suggest comparison with the murals from *Temple I* (*Panjikent I:5*) and *Temple II*.

PANJIKENT II: NORTHERN PRECINCT ROOMS 5–6: NICHE IN THE WEST WALL OF THE NORTHERN CHAPEL AFTER ITS CONSTRUCTION

The northern chapel in the precincts of *Temple II* was reconstructed at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century. A deep rectangular niche (1.5 m deep,

13. Ibid., 106–107, pl. XIV. See also Belenitskii, "Raskopki sogdiiskikh khramov v 1948–1950 gg.," *MIA* 37, *TTAÉ* II (1953), 45ff., fig. 18 (sketch of dancers from *Panjikent I:10A*).

14. Kostrov, in *Zhivopis'*, 182.

15. The west wall of this room preserved traces of a figure seated on a throne which was apparently decorated with a lion's head, see Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGÉ* XXXVI (1973), 58, 61; A.M. Belenitskii, "Raskopki na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta (1970 g)," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane X (1970 god)*, Akademiia nauk tadzhikskoi SSR, Institut istorii im. A. Donisha (Moskva 1973), 106ff.

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1.1 m wide), constructed in the passageway of the west wall of the reconstructed hall facing the entrance, contained murals that were executed at the time of the renovation of the chapel. The central figure in the mural was a four-armed female figure provided with shoulder flames, nimbus and a throne composed of the coils of a fantastic reptilian creature (fig. 13). Like the representation of the two-armed enthroned female figure from the chapel wall in the *Temple II* precincts, this figure holds a banner in one of her left hands.

Donor figures, executed on a white plaster ground in a linear and two-dimensional style, are represented on the lateral walls of the niche (pl. 27). The faces and the exposed parts of the bodies of the donors are colored a bright pink or a stark white without the indication of depth or highlights. Sharp color contrasts are provided by a black pigment liberally applied as a local color, and by the occasional use of gold leaf attached to the plaster ground.[16]

Temple II at Panjikent, excavated from 1948 to 1952, and again in 1971, preserved murals on the walls of the central *eivān* and the tetrastyle hall (fig. 12, north wall of *eivān*). No murals were preserved on the walls of the sanctuary at the back of the tetrastyle hall.

PANJIKENT II: A, EIVĀN

Excavations conducted in the *eivān* of *Temple II* in 1971 yielded murals that dated to the earliest period of construction of that temple in the late fifth century. The paintings on the walls of the *eivān* showed traces of renovation, evidently carried out in the sixth century. A frieze of larger than life-size male figures, seated on a rug, was placed above a decorative and complex floral scroll. The late fifth century date suggested by the excavators on stylistic grounds is evidently confirmed by palaeographic evidence. The absence of thrones and the posture of the male figures, shown seated cross-legged on a rug, would suggest their identification as a group of ordinary Sogdians.[17]

Horsemen are depicted moving towards the entrance to the tetrastyle hall.[18] As in other murals from the *eivān* and tetrastyle hall of *Temple II*, the preliminary sketch here appears to have been applied directly on the mud plaster without the use of a white plaster primecoat. It is possible however, that exposure to moisture may have caused the disintegration of the plaster primecoat. The effect of modeling is produced by the varying intensity of pigments applied in several layers. Pigments of the final contour are variously a light or a dark red. The mural was evidently restored and its color contrasts heightened at some date after its original execution.

16. Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, 218, figs. 127, 133; A.M. Belenitskii, B.I. Marshak, "L'Art de Piandjikent à la lumière des dernières fouilles (1958–1968)," *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 3ff., fig. 3.

17. For a report of the excavations conducted in 1971 in the *eivān* of *Temple II*, see Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGÉ* XXXVII (1973), 54–58; *Zhivopis'*, pls. XV–XXIII.

18. *Zhivopis'*, pls. XV–XVI.

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PANJIKENT II:B, EIVĀN (SOUTHERN CORNER OF WEST WALL)

Man with bent head (unpublished).

PANJIKENT II:K, EIVĀN (NORTH WALL)

Procession of female figures moving toward the entrance of the tetrastyle hall (unpublished).

PANJIKENT II:I, EIVĀN (NORTHERN CORNER OF THE WEST WALL)

Mural not preserved.

PANJIKENT II:V, TETRASTYLE HALL (SOUTH WALL)

A scene of mourning for a crowned and youthful male figure is depicted in a large composition, preserved to a length of 8 m and to a height of 1 m[19] (figs. 49, 56, 57). The funeral bier is flanked by lateral groups of figures and four rows of mourners arranged alongside and below the bier. The two lateral groups (each ca. 1.20 × 1.25 m) contain six figures represented on a relatively large scale, the four largest of which are haloed. The heads of the three large figures on the east end of the bier are represented in three-quarter view and are turned towards the funeral bier in the center of the composition. The figures in the group to the west of the funeral bier are turned away from the central scene and face the western side of the composition. A four-armed goddess figures in each of the lateral groups. A small scene, depicted immediately below the large figures in the group to the west of the funeral bier, depicts a fortified building from the ramparts of which appear to topple loose bricks and a number of figures represented on a small scale. A jagged red streak is represented vertically across the fortress. This group of figures and the larger figures directly above it remain unpublished.[20]

PANJIKENT II:G AND D, TETRASTYLE HALL (WEST WALL, SOUTHERN END)

Representation of donors flanking niche. Three standing male figures, on a relatively small scale, are represented on wall *D*.[21] The mural from wall *G* is unpublished.

An ornamental border on the lower *ṣuffa* walls *G* and *D* has preserved traces of two different layers of painting. The first or earlier layer shows an accordion pattern on which was subsequently superimposed a knotted leaf scroll.[22]

PANJIKENT II:ZH AND E, TETRASTYLE HALL (WEST WALL, NORTHERN END)

Standing figure of a male donor holding a portable fire altar is found on wall *E*.[23] The mural from wall *ZH* is not preserved.

19. Ibid., pls. XIX–XXIII.
20. Ibid., 165ff.
21. Ibid., pl. XVII.
22. Ibid., pl. XVIII.
23. A.IU. IAkubovskii, "Itogi rabot ėkspeditsii v 1948 g.," *MIA* 15 (1950), 54, pl. 57.

PANJIKENT II: Z, TETRASTYLE HALL (NORTH WALL)
Riderless saddled horse, with crenelated mane, led by groom and represented larger than life. (This mural is unpublished.)

PANJIKENT III
This sector comprises a vast complex of dwellings consisting of vaulted rooms, passages and rectangular halls. The principal room in such complexes is the rectangular hall with a continuous wall bench (*suffa*) provided with a projecting section on the altar wall opposite the entrance (cf. *Panjikent III:6* and *7*). Despite its construction in the first quarter of the eighth century (see *Part One*, p. 37f.), this sector shows signs of repair and reconstruction.[24]

PANJIKENT III:6, NORTH AND EAST WALLS
On the east wall of this square hall (7 × 7 m) were found fragments of a scene showing a group of four overlapping figures seated cross-legged in a frieze decorated with ornamental borders. A battlement motif decorates the upper border. The lower border is decorated with the motifs of a beribboned bird carrying rings, framed in a pearl pattern, superimposed over other decorative bands.[25] A battle between gods and demons was also depicted on the east wall (fig. 32). A group of equestrian warriors in heavy armor are all that remains of the battle scene on the north wall.[26] Figures grouped around sacrificial altars, placed on a throne, were depicted on the west wall (fig. 6).

These murals were executed in a linear and two-dimensional style on a white plaster ground. Since this method of execution is typical for all later murals from Panjikent, only exceptions will be noted.

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PANJIKENT III:7, NORTH WALL
This is a large square hall (9 × 9 m) with a continuous wall bench (0.4 m high) with a projecting section in the center of the north wall opposite the entrance. Traces of the murals on the walls indicate that the center of the compositional scheme in this room was a large bare-footed personage seated on a golden animal in the center of the north wall. Only one foot and parts of the animal vehicle and throne cover are preserved (2.5 × 1 m).[27] An altar represented to the left of this figure is tended by a kneeling priest. A pearl border separates this scene from the narrower lower register composed of a series of small independent panel compositions (the figures here measure ca. 0.15 × 0.2 m each).

PANJIKENT III:17, WEST WALL
This was a long vaulted room that preserved fragments of murals in its southwest corner.

24. See *Zhivopis'*, pl. IV. The murals from *Panjikent III:2* are unpublished, see D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 115.
25. *Zhivopis'*, pl. XXIV.
26. Ibid., pl. XXV.
27. Ibid., pls. XXVI–XXXII.

A pair of male and female riders is represented below a horizontal band of latticework (pl. 26).[28] Other riders are partially preserved behind this pair (1.6 × 1.5 m).

PANJIKENT VI: 1, NORTH AND SOUTH WALL

This sector was situated near the southeastern corner of the town. Its principal rectangular hall (6.8 × 6.7 m) included a *ṣuffa* with a projecting bench on the south wall opposite the entrance.[29] Of the twenty-five meters of painting that originally decorated the walls of this hall, eight meters have been preserved on the north and south walls and in the corners (to a height of 1.36–1.40 m).[30] Little remains of the central image, represented on a golden animal, that was depicted on the entire face of the south wall. The remaining walls were originally decorated with at least two horizontal registers, of which only sections of the lower register have been preserved[31] (up to a height of 1.05–1.15 m).

Immediately to the right of the enthroned image on the south wall was depicted a standing female figure with a harp (1.32 × 0.56 m)[32] (pl. 28). This figure is followed by a duel between three men in heavy armor represented in the lower register on the south wall (1.88 m long).[33] An equestrian battle (2.08 m long) continues this frieze on the west wall.[34] A series of banqueters is depicted on the southwest corner of the north wall[35] (2.3 m long) (fig. 53). A crowned and seated banqueter carries this theme over to the west wall (0.75 m long)[36] (fig. 53). The remaining murals on the west wall have perished.

Immediately to the left of the enthroned image on the south wall is a lacuna followed by a scene showing three warriors before the open door of a towerlike structure from which emerge a small male figure and a bovine creature (1.5 m long).[37] At the corner of the east wall are found fragments of two standing male figures[38] followed by a scene showing warriors and a wheeled vehicle (1.7 m long).[39] A wide pearl band separates this lower frieze from the *ṣuffa*.

PANJIKENT VI: 8, NORTH WALL

This square hall (7 × 7 m) with its four columns, and *ṣuffa* with a projecting bench, differed from other such structures known from Panjikent in its use of a bent-axis

28. Ibid., pl. XXXIII.
29. For the ground plan of this structure, see *Skul'ptura*, pls. I, L.
30. Ibid., pls. III–VIII, L.
31. D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 119ff.; Kostrov in *Skul'ptura*, 152ff.
32. Kostrov, in *Skul'ptura*, 152ff., pls. XLII–XLIX.
33. *Skul'ptura*, pl. III.
34. Ibid., pls. VI–VII.
35. Ibid., pl. VIII; *Zhivopis'*, pls. XXXVI–XXXIX.
36. *Zhivopis'*, pls. XXXVI, XXXIX.
37. *Skul'ptura*, pls. IV, VII.
38. Ibid., pls. IV, VII.
39. Ibid., pls. V, VIII.

entrance. The entrance in this instance does not face the projecting bench in the *ṣuffa.*

Opposite the entrance on the north wall were found traces of two registers of murals. In the upper register were depicted three figures kneeling before a larger figure represented naked above the waist and colored blue. The effect of plastic modeling produced by the modulated color of the blue flesh of the larger figure is exceptional and does not extend to the treatment of flesh of other figures in this scene.[40]

PANJIKENT VI:13, NORTH AND WEST WALLS

The southern half of this large quadrangular room (11.25 × 7.25 m) was built on a slightly higher level so as to form a large platform, believed by A.M. Belenitskii to have been used for theatrical or musical performances.[41] Two apparently unrelated scenes are depicted on the north wall. On the right is shown a group of seated instrumentalists separated by running figures from a group of warriors depicted on the left end of the north wall.[42]

The west wall of this room preserved a large panel of evidently narrative interest. This panel is composed of three loosely defined superimposed friezes containing separate compositions that are interrelated in their subject matter. Two protagonists, identified by their distinctive headdress and costume, appear in different situations in at least two of the three registers in this panel. The two figures are shown on horseback before a balcony of a large structure, at a board game, and then in conversation with a third individual.[43]

After a considerable lacuna to the left of this panel follows a representation of a warrior in armor.[44] The fragmentary figure of a man with bound arms found in a heap of plaster on the floor of this room may have belonged to this section of the wall.[45] A second fragment found in a heap of plaster on the floor shows a crowned male head in profile and part of a female profile with softly curled reddish hair.[46]

PANJIKENT VI:26, SOUTH AND EAST WALLS, THE VAULT

The arched south wall of this small vaulted two-room structure (measuring 9.5 × 2.5 m) was entirely covered by a single composition. The center of this composition was occupied by a female figure represented on a large scale with nimbus and shoulder flames.

40. Belenitskii, in *Skul'ptura,* 16–17, pls. IX–X.
41. Ibid., 18.
42. Ibid., pls. XI–XII.
43. Ibid., pls. XIII–XV.
44. Ibid., pl. XVI.
45. Ibid., pls. XVIII, XIX:b.
46. Ibid., pls. XVII, XIX:a; A.M. Belenitski, "Nouvelles découvertes de sculptures et de peintures murales a Piandjikent," *Arts Asiatiques* III (1958), figs. 5–6; A.M. Belenitski, B.I. Marshak, "L'Art de Piandjikent à la lumière des dernières fouilles (1958–1968)," *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 14–15.

In her extended hands the figure holds the solar and lunar symbols consisting of circular discs decorated with heads in red and blue respectively (fig. 58). To the right and left of this figure are found traces of smaller human figures.[47]

Fragments of murals from the east wall and the vaulted ceiling of this room indicate that the entire room was originally decorated with paintings. The torso of a warrior in black[48] and an angular male profile[49] were found among the mural fragments on the east wall. The fleur-de-lis motif inscribed in simple leaf patterns alternating with circles decorated the ceiling.[50]

PANJIKENT VI:41

Excavated between 1956 and 1957, this almost square hall (8.50 × 7.35 m), axial entrance, four columns and *ṣuffa*, followed the floor plan typical for such halls. The murals on the four walls of this hall were unusually well preserved but showed extensive damage along the upper parts of the walls and in large sections of the south and west walls.[51] The decorative scheme here evidently centered around the representation of an enthroned divinity on the wall opposite the entrance. The central image was flanked by four superimposed friezes separated by pearl borders and consisting of three upper registers of equal width (each one meter high) and a narrower bottom register (0.6 m high).[52]

The fourth or uppermost register is damaged and preserves only traces of standing figures. Almost 7.3 m of murals were preserved from the third register from the bottom. Two crowded compositions, consisting of a battle scene and a group of figures encircling a small female figure with a musical instrument, are all that remain of the third register.[53] The second register is preserved to a length of about eighteen meters, covering almost half the perimeter walls. This register begins with a group of four riders that move from left to right. The principal figure in this group, represented in at least six situations of contest with various antagonists has been identified by A.M. Belenitskii with Rustam, the hero of the Persian national epic.[54] (Pls. 4–13, figs. 42–44, 55.)

The first and narrowest register, preserved to a length of about twenty-two meters,[55] is divided into small independent panel compositions, twenty of which have been preserved (pls. 12–13, fig. 55). The murals from this room are dated to the early seventh century on stratigraphic grounds (see *Part One*, p. 43).

47. Belenitskii, in *Skul'ptura*, 21, pls. XX–XXII.

48. Ibid., pl. XXIII.

49. Ibid., pl. XXIV.

50. Ibid., pl. XXV.

51. A.M. Belenitskii, "Drevnii Pendzhikent," *SA* 1 (1959), 209, fig. 17.

52. Ibid., fig. 18.

53. Ibid.

54. Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, figs. 136–138. A. M. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta* (Moskva 1973), pls. 7–14.

55. Belenitskii, in *SA* 1 (1959), 216f.; idem, in *Trudy arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane IV*, (1956 g.), XCI (Stalinabad 1959), 108f., fig. 15. Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, pls. 15–17.

PANJIKENT VI:42, NORTH WALL

This vaulted hall, apparently a vestibule of *VI:41*, was richly decorated with murals, traces of which were found on its north, west and south walls. The north wall was divided into at least two registers, the upper one of which showed a series of standing female musicians and dancers (fig. 26). The figures wear long skirts with vertical pleats and high waistlines.[56] The lower register showed a larger than life figure of a warrior in heavy armor (unpublished).

Two layers of paintings were revealed on the north wall of this building. In the first or earlier layer were depicted rows of standing male and female figures and the representation of a male figure with a bovine animal (fig. 15). These figures are distinguished by their hairstyles which have been associated by Belenitskii with Chinese prototypes. The fan (?), sleeve folds and pouch suspended from the belt of a male figure from this group were also derived from Chinese models by the same author.[57] The murals from this room are dated to the early seventh century on stratigraphic grounds (see *Part One*, p. 43).

PANJIKENT VI:55, NORTH AND SOUTH WALLS

This quadrangular vaulted room was connected to *VI:41* and *VI:42* with which it formed a unit within *sector VI*. The entire wall surface and vault of this room was originally decorated with murals. On the north wall was found a larger than life representation of a warrior in heavy armor (2.5 m high) against a dark red background (fig. 45). A female warrior represented on an equally large scale was depicted on the south wall[58] (fig. 46). A similar scene was represented also on the southeast wall (unpublished). The upper register on the east and west walls showed a narrow frieze of seated figures against a lapis lazuli blue ground (0.4 m high).

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PANJIKENT VII:14, NICHE, ITS LATERAL WALL

A large male figure with bare torso and leg, colored blue, is represented in a dancing position in the center of the mural painted inside a niche in a room from *sector VII*. This figure is flanked by two smaller kneeling figures and is framed by an arch supported by two columns. On the lateral wall to the right of the niche were found traces of two superimposed registers of murals depicting a kneeling musician on the top and a donor on the bottom register.[59]

56. A.M. Belenitskii, "Ob arkheologicheskikh rabotakh pendzhikentskogo otriada v 1958 g.," *Trudy Instituta istorii im. Akhmada Donisha* XXVII (Dushanbe 1961), 87, 90ff., fig. 5; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 27, fig. 22.

57. Belenitskii, in *Trudy Instituta istorii im. Akhmada Donisha* XXVII (1961), 94, fig. 6; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), fig. 10.

58. A.M. Belenitskii, "Resul'taty raskopok na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta v 1960 g.," *Trudy arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane VIII, (1960 g.)*, XXXIX, Akademiia nauk tadzhikskoi SSR, Institut istorii im. Akhmada Donisha (Dushanbe 1962), 105–106, figs. 15–16; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 23, figs. 11–12.

59. A.M. Belenitskii, "Iz istorii kul'turnykh sviazei Srednei Azii i Indii v rannem srednevekov'e," *KSIA* 98 (1964), 37f.; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 9, 12, fig. 4. Small figures

PANJIKENT XVI:10, CHAPEL

Situated in a private residence near the bazaar district of the Panjikent *shahristān*, this room was provided with a fixed altar built of baked brick in a part of the wall which was usually reserved for the divine image in larger halls. Divine representations are evidently absent in private chapels with a fixed altar of this type at Panjikent.

The projection of the wall next to the altar in *XVI:10* was decorated with a mural showing a male figure dressed in white leaning on a cane. This figure was followed by a row of eight richly dressed banqueters on the adjacent wall[60] (pls. 29–30, fig. 36).

PANJIKENT XVII:14

This rectangular hall of a private residence had four central columns and an entrance on the east wall. The fragmentary mural on the west wall depicts a wrestling match between two male contestants in shorts. The figures are placed against the irregular outlines of a stream of water, painted blue, and strips of shoreline decorated with stylized vegetation. Two female torsos are represented in the foreground above a border decorated with an accordion pattern.[61]

PANJIKENT XXI:1

In 1965 *Panjikent XXI*, the largest residence at Panjikent, yielded almost forty meters of murals from the nearly seventy meters that originally decorated its walls (fig. 18). On the wall opposite the altar (*XXI:3*) was found the representation of a male and female couple seated informally under a canopy.[62] Next to this scene were found representations of two standing warriors, and female dancers with long tresses.

Two superimposed registers of paintings were uncovered in the main hall (9 × 9 m) *XXI:1*, in 1964. The principal frieze depicted a sequence of battles between male and female antagonists, described by Belenitskii as an amazonomachy[63] (pls. 14–20). The narrow lower frieze was composed of contiguous panels of small independent compositions, illustrating popular stories that included the tale of the man who

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of dancers, represented in a small panel composition from the bottom register of a mural from *Panjikent VII:2*, are found in the same complex, see Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 27, fig. 23. The size of the fragment showing the blue figure is not reported.

60. Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, figs. 143–145; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 18, fig. 8; V.I. Raspopova, "Otchet o raskopkakh XVI ob″ekta gorodishcha drevnego Pendzhikenta v 1970 g.," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane X (1970 god)* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1973), 130ff., pl. 18.

61. Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 27, fig. 24. The size of this fragment is not reported.

62. A.M. Belenitskii, V.I. Raspopova, *Drevnii Pendzhikent* (Dushanbe 1971), 21–22, fig. 6; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 18ff., fig. 9.

63. Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 24, fig. 13; Belenitsky, *Central Asia*, fig. 132; Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Penzhikenta*, pls. 23–32.

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slaughtered the goose that laid the golden egg, and the tale of the lion and the clever hare[64] (pl. 25, fig. 54).

PANJIKENT XXII:1, NICHE FROM THE PRINCIPAL HALL

In 1967 and 1968 murals were uncovered in the niche of the altar of the principal hall in *sector XXII:1*. The niche in the center of the north wall was decorated with a tricephalic personage with a male central torso flanked by a feminine and a blue leonine head to its right and left respectively (fig. 5). Kneeling figures were depicted on the wall next to the niche (fig. 27).[65] In 1966–1967 the same hall had yielded murals flanking the niche of the altar. The dramatic moments of an unknown legend are there depicted in a sequence of scenes that culminate in the victory of one of the protagonists before the gates of a castle. A Sogdian inscription on the door of the castle identifies the protagonists as *δwynk* and *bgy*, and explains the story[66] (fig. 60).

PANJIKENT XXIV:2, VAULTED ROOM AND FRAGMENTS OF MURALS FROM XXIV:13, and from A SECOND STORY (XXIV:3)

Excavations conducted in this sector since 1969 have uncovered murals on the arched back wall of a vaulted room (figs. 4, 19). An enthroned male and female couple are represented under a vault, supported by columns, that follows the arched contour of the end wall (fig. 7). The throne is supported by a camel and a ram and the couple is flanked by two small kneeling male figures.[67] Another similar composition was uncovered in *XXIV:13* (fig. 8). Fragments of murals from the lateral walls of the vaulted room show the figure of a youthful groom leading a horse towards a richly dressed seated male figure.[68]

Fragments believed to have belonged to a room on the second floor were found in a heap in the *eivān* of this complex. These depict equestrian archers accompanied by a flying bird bearing a necklace (fig. 47). Traces of an upper register and a lower ornamental border were also found on this fragment.[69] A monumental frieze showing seated banqueters was discovered in the same sector (fig. 17).[70]

64. Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 24ff., figs. 14–15; Belenitskii, Raspopova, *Drevnii Pendzhikent*, op. cit., 20ff., fig. 5; Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe iskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, pls. 33–34.

65. A. Belenitskii, B. Marshak, V. Raspopova, "Pendzhikent," *Nauka i Zhizn'* 8 (Moskva 1971), 123; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 9ff., fig. 5. The sizes of these murals are not reported.

66. Belenitskii, Raspopova, Marshak, in *Nauka i Zhizn'* 8 (1971), 124; Belenitski, Marshak, in *Arts Asiatiques* XXIII (1971), 26ff., figs. 19–20.

67. Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGÉ* XXXVI (1973), 61–64, fig. on p. 62; A.M. Belenitskii, "Raskopki na gorodishche drevnego Pendzhikenta (1970 g.)," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane X (1970 god)* (Moskva 1973), 111–116.

68. Ibid., fig. on p. 64.

69. Ibid., fig. on p. 63.

70. Belenitskii, Raspopova, Marshak, in *Nauka i Zhizn'* 8 (1971), detail reproduced in color on the bottom of the back cover; G. Azarpay, in *Iranica Antiqua* XI (1976), fig. 7.

A fragment showing a warrior in armor (unpublished) was uncovered in the debris of one of the vaulted rooms in this sector in 1971. Among the mural fragments uncovered in the *eivān* of this complex in the same year were haloed female heads with shoulder flames, and in one instance, with a crescent around the lower torso. The turbaned head with side locks and lunar crescent was interpreted by the excavators as a reference to one of the phases of the moon. The other heads were thus regarded as manifestations of other lunar phases.[71] A freer style was apparently adopted in the representation of vases of pomegranate blossoms directly below the heads (fig. 20). A male cupbearer (fig. 21) and a fragmentary haloed warrior were also uncovered in the *eivān*, the cornice of which bore a frieze of human-headed birds with foliate tails depicted against a black background[72] (fig. 22).

PANJIKENT CITADEL: RULER'S PALACE (KUHANDIZ)

The ruler's palace at Panjikent was situated on a hill to the west of the town (pl. 1, fig. 1). It was a towerlike structure with two large adjacent complexes connected by vaulted passages. Fragments of murals evidently datable to the first quarter of the eighth century (see *Part One*, p. 65f.) have been uncovered in excavations conducted since 1964 in corridor 4, hall 2, and "outer court" 5.[73] Those from corridor 4 are unpublished.[74] A published fragment from the west wall of the quadrangular hall 2 (11 × 11 m) depicts a row of beribboned birds in pearl roundels. The murals discovered in a heap on the floor of the large throne room, or "outer court" 5 (18.5 × 12.5 m) included representations of a crowned personage, flying figures and other individuals rendered with an almost miniaturistic delicacy (figs. 30, 31, pls. 23, 24). These fragments are distinguished by exquisite draftsmanship and a subtle and limited color scheme composed of greyish white local colors outlined in black with gold highlights against a dark blue lapis lazuli ground.[75]

A turbaned male figure in a long shirt (cf. also fig. 31, left) and a sword worn on a shoulder belt in the manner of the Arabs, uncovered among the murals at the Panjikent citadel in 1969, suggested the identification of a mural uncovered there in 1971 as a reference to an Arab siege of a Sogdian city. A fortress defended by warriors in armor is there shown besieged by an enemy force consisting of men in long shirts who operate an elaborate siege engine (figs. 28–29). A fragment of painted plaster, baked in the fire that destroyed the Panjikent palace when the Arabs took it ca. 722, shows helmeted heads

71. Belenitskii, Marshak, in *SGE* XXXVII (1974), 54, fig. 1.

72. Ibid., 54–55, fig. 2.

73. For earlier excavations of the Panjikent citadel, see B.IA. Staviskii, "Raskopki zhiloi bashni v kukhendize Pendzhikentskogo Vladetelia," *MIA* 15 (1950); A.I. Terenozhkin, "Raskopki v kukhendize Pendzhikenta," ibid. For the recent excavations of this site, see A. Isakov, "Dvorets pravitelei drevnego Pendzhikenta," *Strany i narody vostoka* X (Moskva 1971), 76–82; Belenitskii, Marshak, *SGE* XXXVII (1973), 57–58.

74. Isakov, in *Strany i narody vostoka* X, 80.

75. Ibid., 80–81 (hall 2); Belenitskii, *Monumental'noe isskusstvo Pendzhikenta*, 1973, figs. 35–39.

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depicted according to the stylistic standards of later Sogdian painting, and embellished with highlights and chiaroscuro effects.[76]

SAMARKAND (AFRASIAB)

In 1913 the excavations of V.L. Viatkin at Afrasiab, the ancient quarter of Samarkand, uncovered a fragment of a mural showing three figures, of which only sketched copies are preserved. D'iakonov has ascribed this mural to the sixth to seventh century on stylistic grounds.

Excavations conducted at Afrasiab since 1968 have uncovered several aristocratic residences which were first noted in 1965. One of these contained a large square hall (*Room 1*), 11 × 11 m, with a continuous wall bench and an eastern entrance. This hall was found to have been decorated with four independent friezes on each of the four walls. A bridal cortege is depicted on the south wall, hunting scenes on the north wall, scenes from life in distant lands on the east wall, and an enthronement scene on the west wall opposite the entrance. Sogdian inscriptions written directly on the murals explain the last scene as a procession of emissaries sent to the king of Samarkand from Chaghanian (a principality in the basin of the Surkhan Dar'ya River, in northern Tukhāristān),[77] Shāsh (the Tashkent region) and other districts[78] (pls. 21–22, figs. 50–52). Turks are depicted with long braided hair and Mongolian features in the center of the west wall (fig. 52). Another group of figures represented with Mongolian physiognomy and distinctive dress on the west wall is identified by L.I. Al'baum as a Chinese mission. The paintings are associated by Al'baum with the reign of Vargoman (*βrγwm'n*), who was ruler of Samarkand and king of Sogdiana (*ikhshīd*) in the mid seventh century.[79] A pair of male and female deities, each holding a small image of a camel on a platter (see *Part One*, p. 47), was uncovered on a wall from *Room 9*, at Afrasiab, dated on stylistic grounds to the sixth century.[80]

76. Belenitskii, Marshak, *SGÉ* (1973), 57–58, figs. 5–6.

77. V.L. Viatkin, *Gorodishche Afrasiab* (Tashkent 1927); D'iakonov, in *Zhivopis'*, 91–92, fig. 1; V.A. Shishkin, *Afrasiab, sokrovishchnitsa drevnei kul'tury* (Tashkent 1966); idem, "Novye pamiatniki iskusstva Sogd," *Iskusstvo* I (Moskva 1966), 62–66; L.I. Al'baum, "Novye rospisi Afrasiaba," *Strany i narody vostoka* X (Moskva 1971), 83–89. Additional panels of murals discovered in the principal room in the palace at Samarkand, first uncovered in 1965, have now been published by Al'baum. Since this publication appeared after the completion of the present manuscript and it was therefore not possible to include a detailed study of these murals in the present discussion, see L.I. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba* (Tashkent 1975).

78. V.A. Livshits, "Nadpisi na freskakh iz Afrasiaba," *Tezisy dokladov sessii, Gosudarstvennyi ordena Lenina Ermitazh, Leningradskoe otdelenie instituta arkheologi ANSSR*, November 15–20 (Leningrad 1965); R.N. Frye, "The Significance of Greek and Kushan Archaeology in the History of Central Asia," *Journal of Asian History* I:1 (Wiesbaden 1967), 33–44.

79. For reproductions of details of the painting on the west wall showing the Turkish and Chinese types, see Al'baum, in *Strany i narody vostoka* X, 88, figs. on pp. 86–87. On the date of the paintings, see Al'baum, ibid., 88, and O.I. Smirnova, *Ocherki iz istorii Sogda* (Moskva 1970), 275.

80. Al'baum, *Zhivopis' Afrasiaba*, pl. II.

THE BUKHARA OASIS (VARAKHSHA)

The Bukhara oasis is situated on the ancient delta of the Zarafshan River that now runs dry in the Kyzylkum Desert. The seat of the Sogdian dynasty of the kings of Bukhara (the *bukhār khudāh*) was at Varakhsha, just northwest of Bukhara on the right bank of the dry bed of the Zarafshan. The palace of the kings of Bukhara was located in a fortified citadel that overlooked the flourishing early medieval town of Varakhsha watered by a network of irrigation canals. Murals have been uncovered in at least three large halls built in the vicinity of a large open court with a spacious triple-arched *eivān*.[81]

VARAKHSHA: 11 (THE RED HALL)

This large quadrangular hall (12 × 7.85 m) with a continuous wall bench on three walls contained two meters of murals in two superimposed registers placed above the *ṣuffa*. The first frieze, with a lower scroll border, shows a sequence of hunting scenes in which hunters seated on elephants attack felines or fantastic winged creatures depicted against a bright red background (1.25 to 1.30 m high). The second and only partially preserved frieze depicts an animal procession that includes real and fantastic creatures, some of which are harnessed with saddles and trappings.[82]

VARAKHSHA: 6 (EAST HALL)

This hall preserves only its southern, western and a section of its eastern walls. Its ground plan was altered in the tenth century when the "eastern suite," *Rooms 7–10*, were built against its northern and western sides. The *west wall* of the "east hall" preserved traces of a mural depicting equestrian warriors against a blue background.[83] The *south wall* of the same hall preserved parts of a monumental composition depicting an enthroned personage, preserved in parts to a height of three meters. Only the feet, part of the trousers, sword and throne of the principal image are preserved. The throne leg was depicted as a winged camel, colored yellow with red contours, to the left of which were shown five kneeling figures. The first figure is turned towards an altar on the left of the throne. The row of haloed figures to the right of the altar are shown on a larger scale than the first figure and are arranged in a row headed by a male personage tending the fire on the altar.[84]

VARAKHSHA: 7–10 (EASTERN SUITE)

Three mural fragments found near the entrance of this later suite of rooms, *Rooms 7–10* show hunters represented in reddish brown pigments on a blue background. The figure

81. V.A. Shishkin, "Nekotorye itogi arkheologicheskikh raboty na gorodishche Varakhsha (1947–53 gg.)," *Trudy Instituta istorii i arkheologii* VIII, Akademiia nauk Uzbekskoi SSR, Institut istorii i arkheologii (Tashkent 1956), 3–42; idem, *Varakhsha* (Moskva 1963), 150–165; R.N. Frye, *The History of Bukhara* (Cambridge, Mass. 1954), 8, 17.

82. Shishkin, *Varakhsha*, pls. I–XIII.

83. Ibid., pl. XVII.

84. Ibid., pls. XIV–XVI.

of a hunter on horseback turned around to shoot backward, like the other unpublished details of this mural, is represented on a small scale in a miniaturistic style (0.21 × 0.27 m), dated on stratigraphic grounds to the tenth to eleventh centuries.[85]

USTRUSHANA

The Sogdian principality of Ustrushana had its early medieval capital at Bunjikat, situated on both banks of the Sharistansai River, near the modern Tajik town of Ura-Tyube, north of Panjikent. The principal seat of the *afshins* or princes of Ustrushana at Bunjikat was first built up in the fifth or sixth century at the site of Qal'a-i Qahqaha I, near the modern town of Shahristan,[86] in northern Tajikistan. Despite the damage caused by two fires,[87] the palaces yielded a wealth of murals and wood carvings comparable to those found at other Sogdian sites. The murals from Ustrushana, reported chiefly in Tajik publications by N.N. Negmatov (Ne"matov),[88] display colors and a thematic repertory that distinguish them as products of a local artistic school that was independent of other Sogdian centers.

USTRUSHANA: QAL'A-I QAHQAHA I: ROOM II

This residential unit uncovered between 1967 and 1969 contained a mural six meters long on its east wall. The mural is preserved to a height of about 0.85 m, and is separated from the edge of the *ṣuffa* by a pearl band over a leaf-scroll border. The theme of the mural, described by Negmatov as "she-wolf suckling two infants," is in reality a sequence of episodes possibly from a single legend that ends with the scene of a she-wolf suckling two naked infants (fig. 59). From left to right, the mural contains a scene showing a bare-legged enthroned male figure approached by a kneeling half-naked female figure. A seminude female figure (perhaps the same as in the previous episode) is next shown kneeling before a man dressed in black who appears to cradle a bundle in his arms. A standing figure separates this scene from a river flanked by standing and walking figures. The last episode on the left of the mural involves the scene in which a she-wolf is shown suckling two human infants, approached by a figure with a mass of crinkled drapery.[89]

85. Ibid., pl. XVIII, 164–165.

86. Bunjikat flourished under the Samanids when it was divided into three sectors, comprising the *kuhandiz* (Qal'a-i Qahqaha II), *shahristān* (Qal'a-i Qahqaha I), and a craftsmen's and workers' sector, see N.N. Ne"matov, *Asrori Ustaravshan* (Dushanbe: Nashriyori "Irfon," 1972), 8. Thus the earlier palaces of the Sogdian princes or *afshins* were situated in the area of the later Samanid *shahristān*.

87. The first fire of the palaces of the *afshins* of Bunjikat is associated with the time of the 'Abbāsid conquest of the town in 822. The second fire dates from the time of the death of the last *afshin* when Ustrushana was annexed to the Samanid state by Isma'il (892–907).

88. Ne"matov, *Asrori Ustaravshan*, 17ff.; idem, in *Izvestiia Akademii nauk tadzhikskoi SSR*, 2(52) (Dushanbe 1968), 21–32.

89. Ne"matov, *Asrori Ustaravshan*, 20ff., fig. 8; idem, "O zhivopisi dvortsa afshinov Ustrushany," *SA* 3 (1973), 183–202, fig. 15.

This sequence, identified by Negmatov as a reference to the legend of Romulus and Remus, is depicted skillfully and in a careful style associated with the sixth or seventh centuries. Most of the colors, with the exception of the lapis lazuli blue, have faded as a result of their exposure to the two fires.

USTRUSHANA: SMALL HALL OF THE PALACE AT SHAHRISTAN: QAL'A-I QAHQAHA I

Excavated since 1970 the east wall of this small hall yielded a large number of murals, described as part of superimposed registers that depicted a variety of themes. On a lower register were represented warriors engaged in a battle against a three-headed equestrian personage, interpreted by Negmatov as an allusion to the legend of Ḍaḥḥāk and Farīdūn, known from the Persian national epic. Another register evidently showed a crowned goddess represented frontally, holding a gold bird-shaped staff in one hand, and a silver object terminating in a leonine form in the other. A solar disc and a lunar crescent may have been held in two additional hands, now damaged. The goddess was seated on a throne in the shape of a leonine head, and was surrounded by two nimbus rings.

The figure is depicted in fine black contours on a white plaster primecoat. The face of the goddess is painted a greyish white, and the principal colors used are ultramarine, yellow, and green. In 1971 another version of the four-armed goddess, with solar and lunar emblems held in two of her four hands, was discovered on the north wall of the same hall (1 × 0.8 m). Here the goddess is represented astride a saddled lion. A three-eyed demon with a greenish grey body and yellow mane, represented with skulls attached to his head, and with a string of bells, is depicted in a dancing posture in a fragment from the same wall. Another fragment shows a similar demon, but without the skulls. A troupe of animals consisting of lions and jackals was evidently represented in motion from right to left around and over the main portal. The reconstruction of these and other fragments is still in progress.[90]

USTRUSHANA: CHIL'KHUJRA CASTLE, SHAHRISTAN AREA

The north wall of a small hall destroyed by fire yielded traces of murals consisting of a double frieze separated by a pearl border. The upper register preserved traces of a frontal female head in yellow ocher and cinnabar red against a dark lapis lazuli background. Traces of riders and horses, also painted against a blue background, were found in the lower register.[91]

90. Ibid.; idem, in *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane X (1970 god)* (Moskva 1973), 99ff.; N. Negmatov, V. Sokolovskii, "Dva fragmenta stennoi rospisi s izobrazhenniem mnogorukoi bogini iz Shakhristana," *SGE* XXXVII (1973), 58–60; idem, "Raboty Severo-Tadzhikistanogo arkheologicheskogo otriada v 1972 g.," *Arkheologicheskie raboty v Tadzhikistane XII (1972 g.)*, Akademiia nauk tadzhikskoi SSR, Institut istorii im. A. Donisha, ed. B. A. Litvinskii et al. (Dushanbe 1976), 127–132.

91. U. P. Pulatov, "Fragment rospisi iz Chil'khudzhry," *Izvestiia Akademii nauk tadzhikskoi SSR* 2(52) (Dushanbe 1968), 102–106, fig. 1.

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Designer: Theo Jung
Compositor: William Clowes
Printer: Carey Colorgraphic
Binder: Roswell Bookbinding
Text: Monotype Bembo
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Paper 80 lb. Luster Offset Enamel Dull

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Color Plates

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Color Plates

1. The citadel of Old Panjikent showing the remains of the Sogdian royal residence and the Zarafshan River, Tajikistan SSR.

2. Khwarezmian mural showing a standing figure, from Toprak-kala, Uzbekistan SSR. Third century. Copy.

3. Detail of a mural depicting a frieze of banqueters from the west wall of the residential complex at Balalyk-tepe, northern Tukhāristān, in Uzbekistan SSR. Sixth to seventh century. Copy. Head of figure, ca. 18 cm, total height of mural 1.8 m.

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4–13. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from *Panjikent VI: 41*. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

14–20. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Amazon cycle" from *Panjikent XXI: 1*. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

21. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting members of the Chaghanian mission to the royal court at Samarkand. South wall of *Room 1*, Samarkand. Mid seventh century. Copy.

22. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting members of the Chaghanian mission to the royal court at Samarkand. South wall of *Room 1*, Samarkand. Mid seventh century. In situ.

23. Detail of a Sogdian mural from the royal residence, the Panjikent citadel. Early eighth century. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

24. Detail of a Sogdian mural from the royal residence, the Panjikent citadel. Early eighth century. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

25. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting the tale of the slaughter of the goose that laid golden eggs, from *Panjikent XXI:1*. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

26. Sogdian mural depicting male and female riders, from *Panjikent III:17.* Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

27. A four-armed goddess and donors depicted in a Sogdian mural from the northern chapel, in the precincts of *Temple II*, Panjikent. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

28. Sogdian mural depicting a harpist, from *Panjikent VI:1.*

29. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting a frieze of banqueters, from *Panjikent XVI:10.* Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

30. Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting a frieze of banqueters, from *Panjikent XVI:10.* Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.

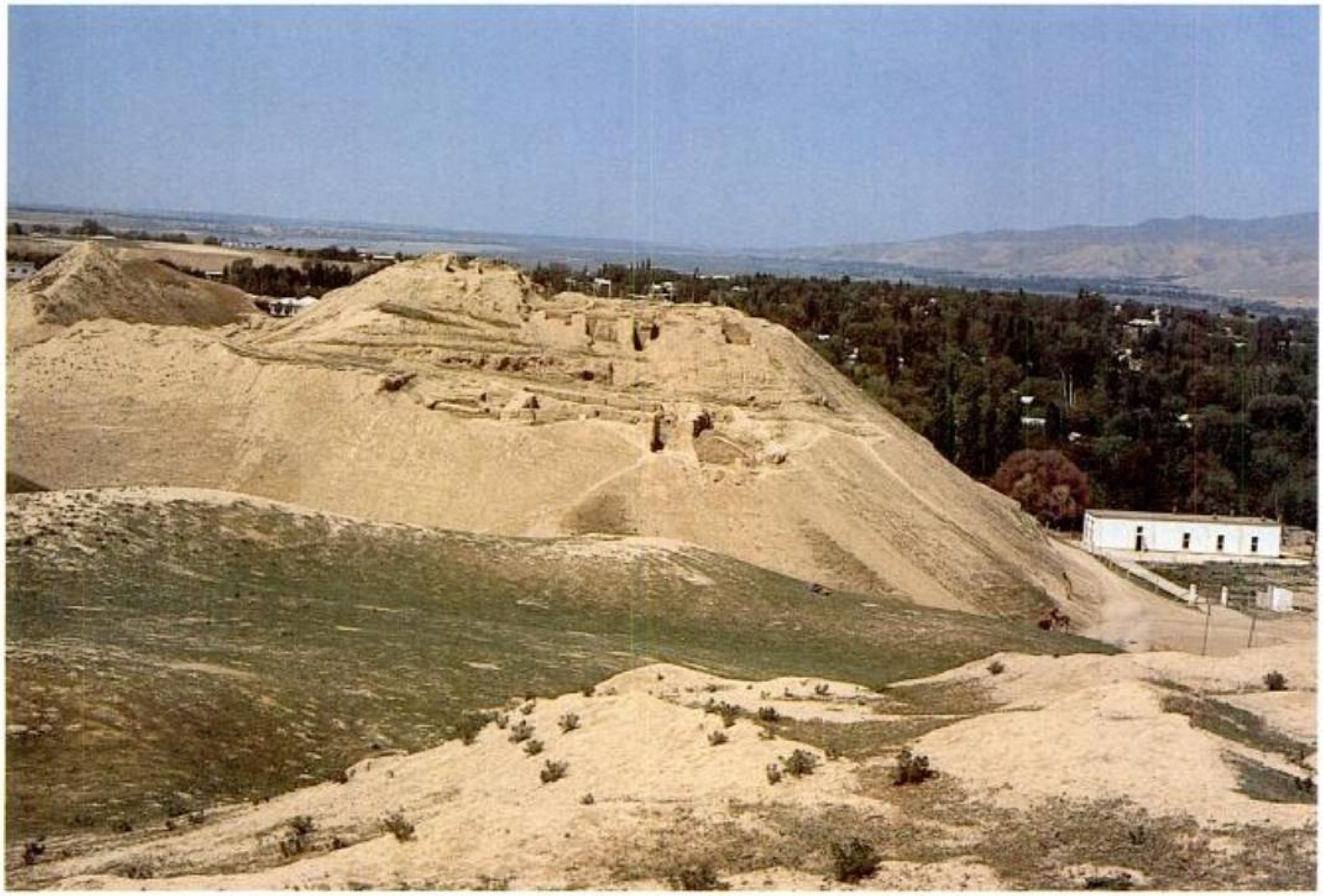

Plate 1. The citadel of Old Panjikent showing the remains of the Sogdian royal residence and the Zarafshan River, Tajikistan SSR.

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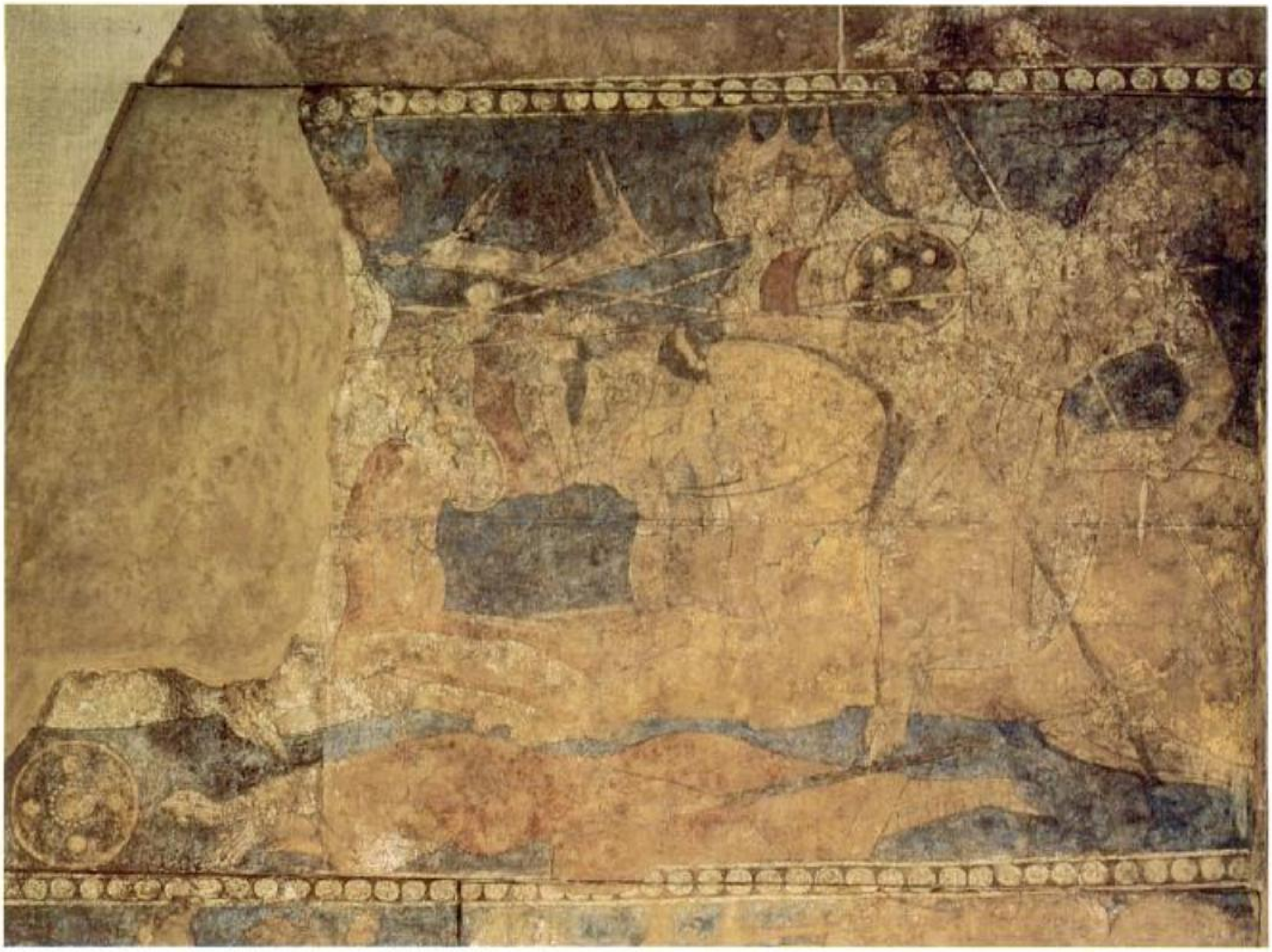

Plate 4. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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Plate 5. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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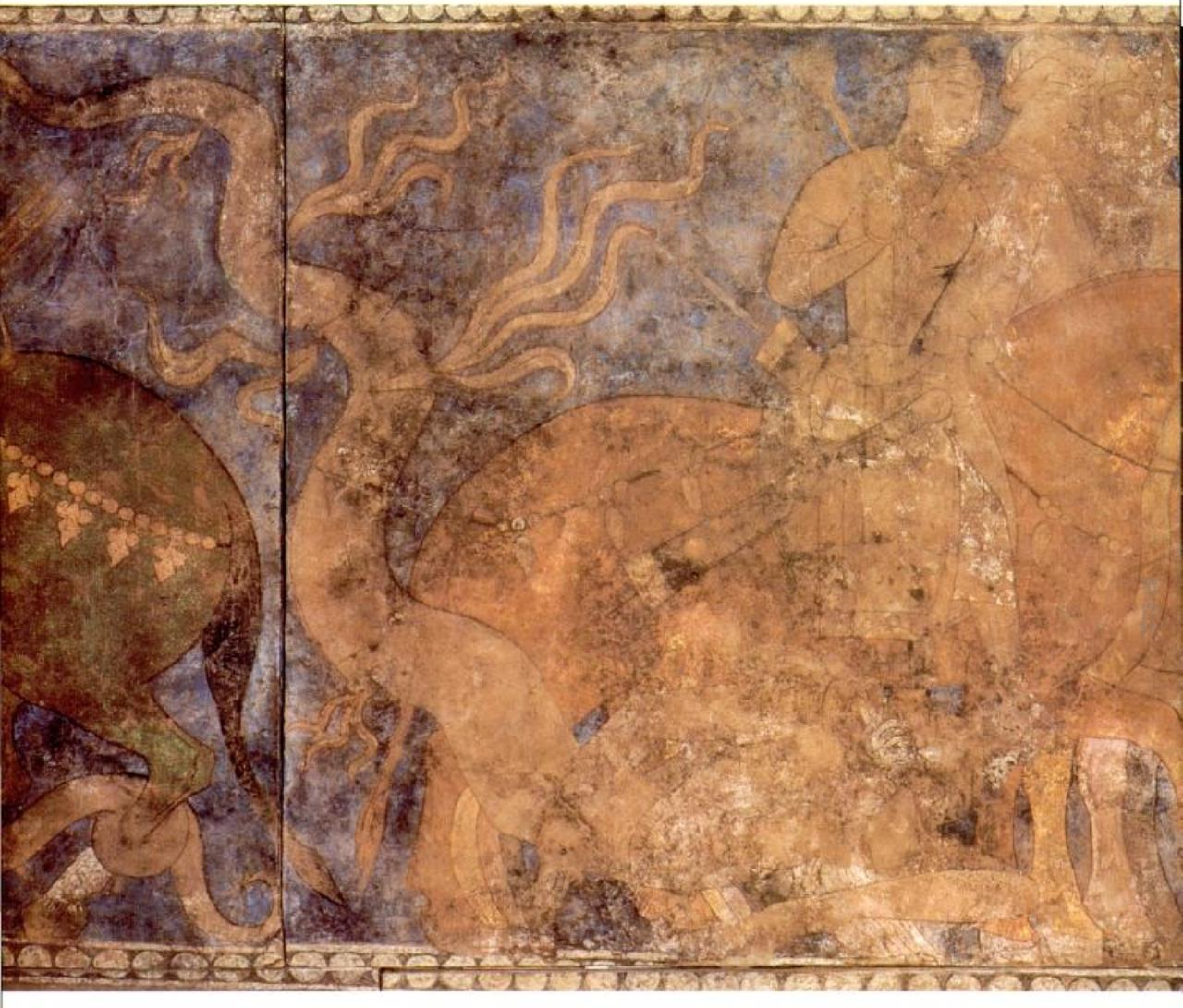
Plate 6–7. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*



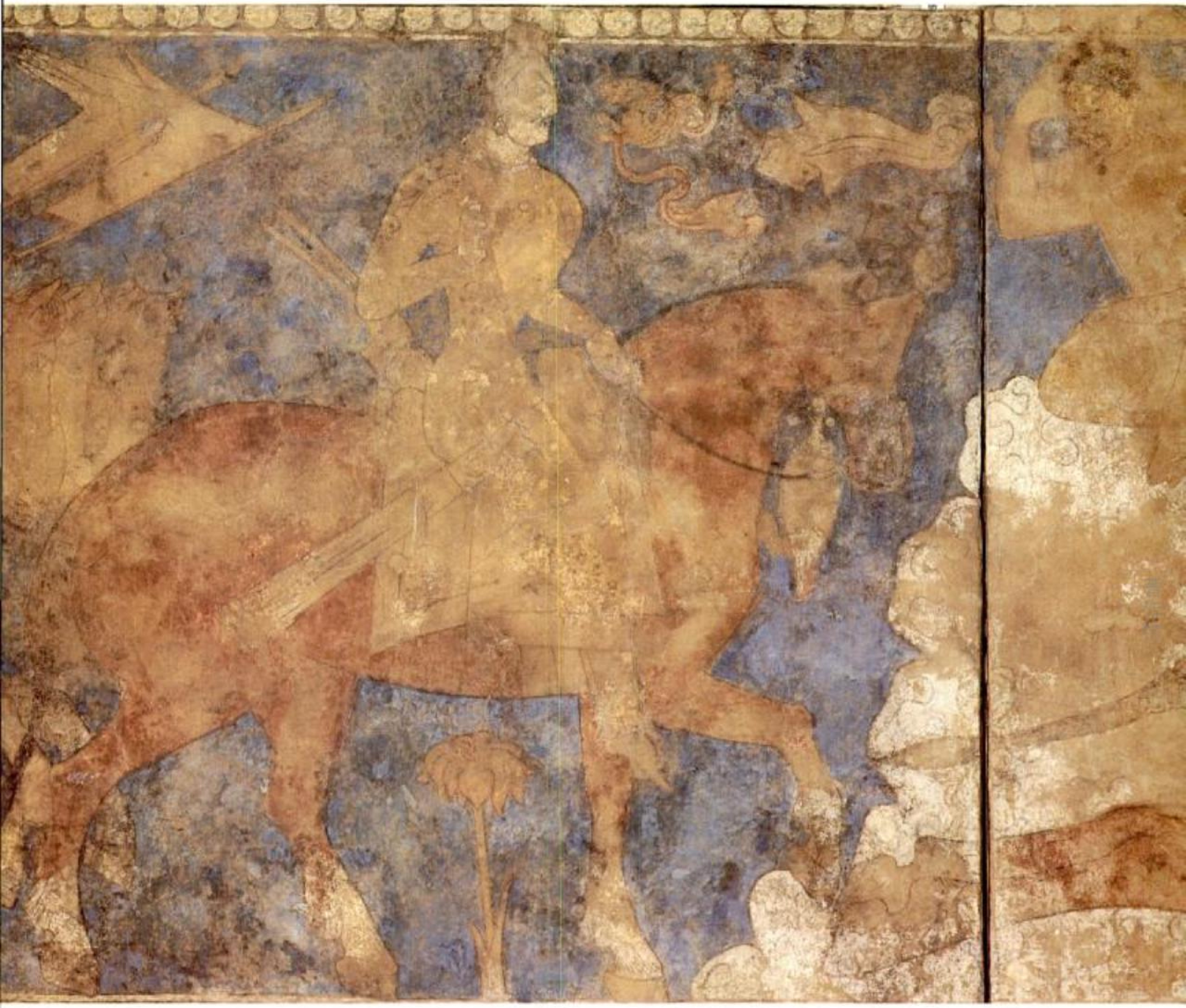


Plate 8–9. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

Plate 10. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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Plate 11. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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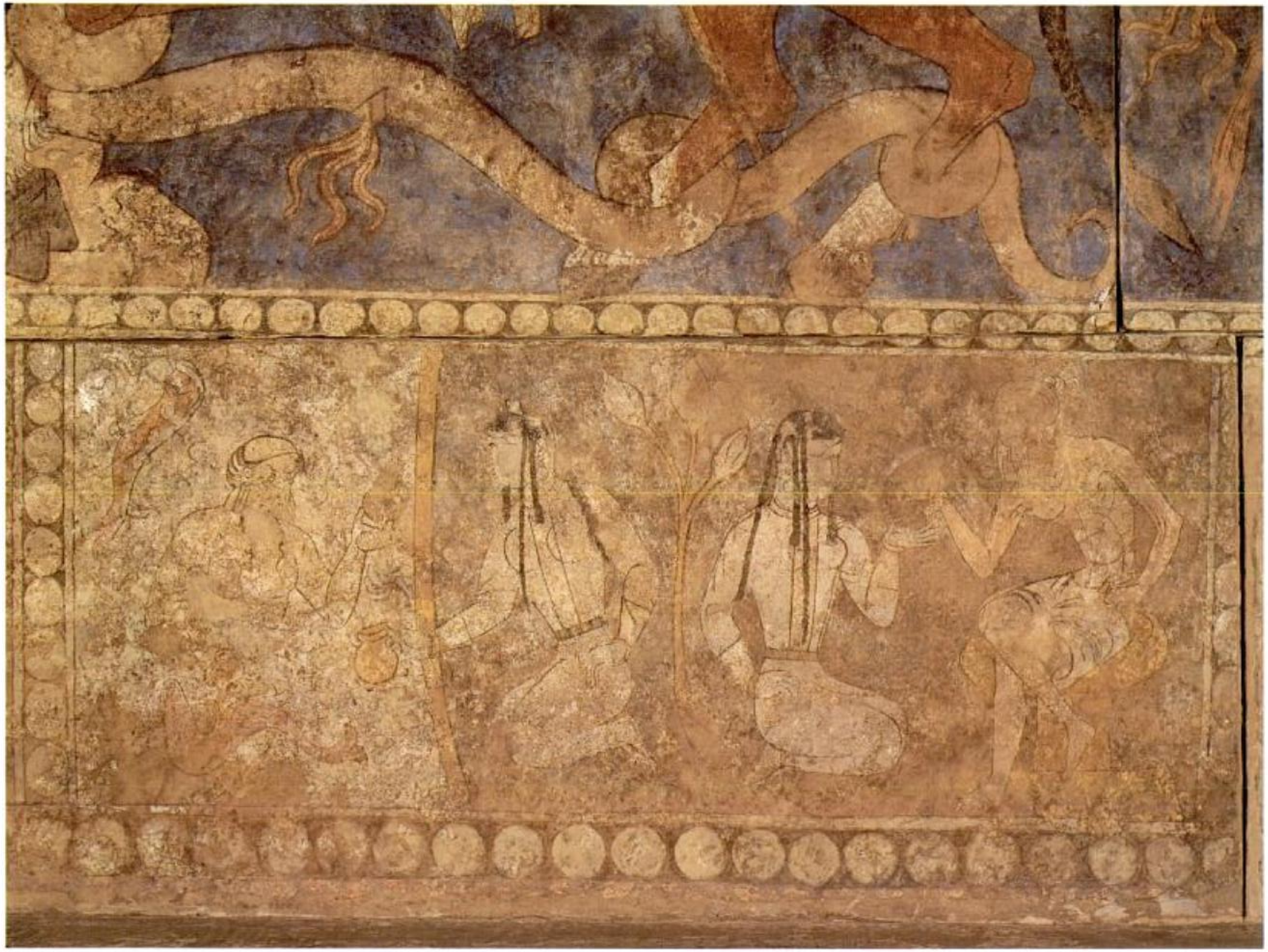

Plate 12. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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Plate 13. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Rustam cycle" from Panjikent VI:41. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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Plate 14. Detail from a Sogdian mural depicting the "Amazon cycle" from Panjikent XXI:1. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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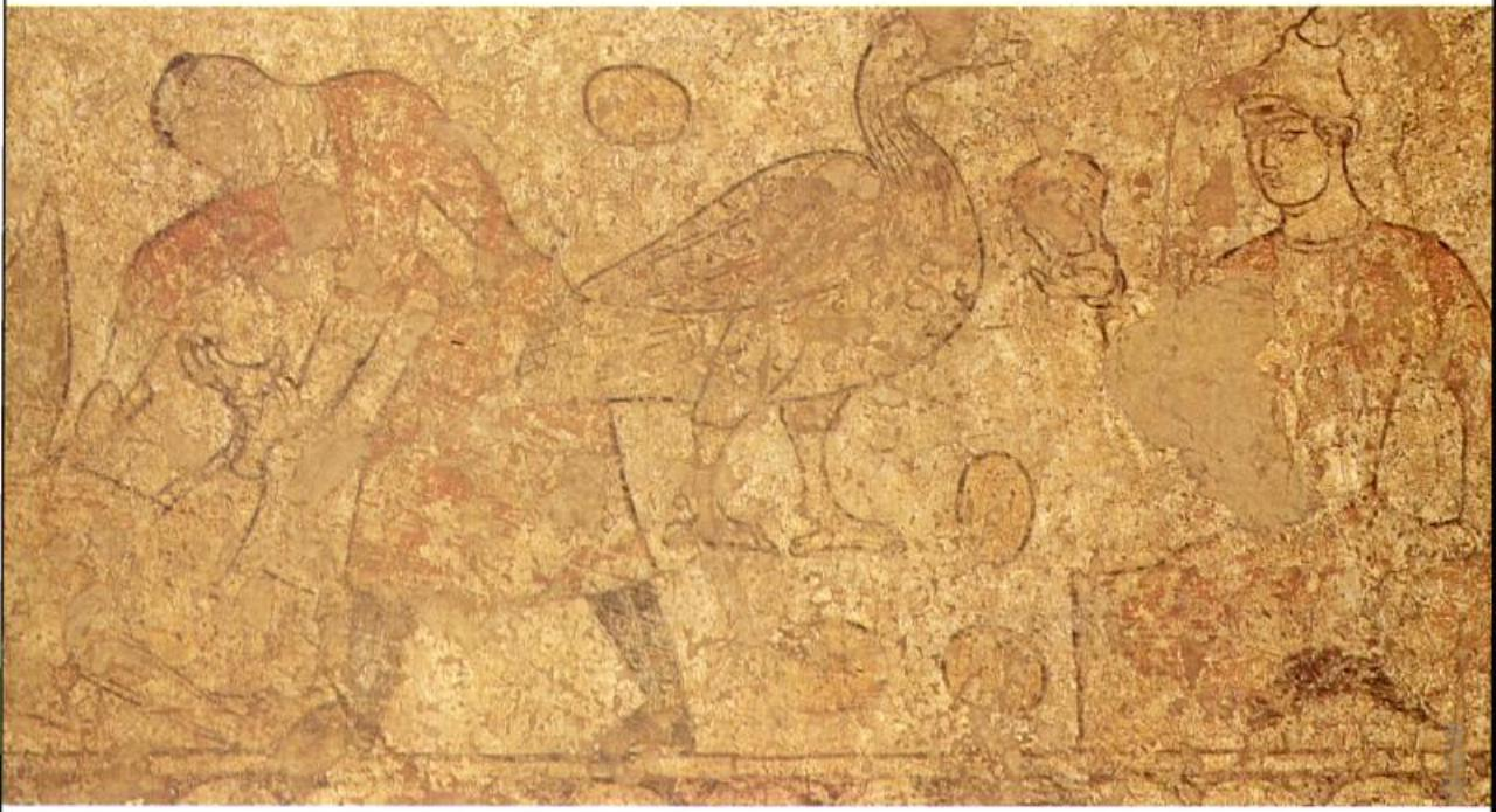

Plate 27. A four-armed goddess and donors depicted in a Sogdian mural from the northern chapel, in the precincts of Temple II, *Panjikent. Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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Plate 28 (left). Sogdian mural depicting a harpist, from Panjikent VI:1.

Plate 29 (above). Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting a frieze of banqueters, from Panjikent XVI:10. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

Plate 30 (overleaf). Detail of a Sogdian mural depicting a frieze of banqueters, from Panjikent XVI:10. *Photo courtesy D. Belous, Moscow.*

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